THE GRINDER PAPERS.

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By MARY KYLE DALLAS.



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The Grinder Papers.

BEING THE ADVENTURES OF

MISS CHARITY GRINDER

WHEREIN ARE DETAILED HER NUMEROUS HAIR-BREADTH ESCAPES AND WONDERFUL ADVENTURES WHILE ON A VISIT TO NEW YORK FROM THE COUNTRY.

BY

MARY KYLE DALLAS,

Author "WINIFRED," etc.

Come, ye long-faced and crabbed ones,
Who groan, and sigh, and fret.
About hard times—there's for you
A panacea yet.
The Grinder Papers certainly
Will chase your looks forlorn,
For "fun alive" was ne'er on earth
Till "Charity" was born.—ANON.

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THE GRINDER PAPERS.

NUMBER ONE.

MISS CHARITY GRINDER IN TOWN.

"Is this me? I should think it was, Cousin Martha!"

I always did intend to come to town, some time, but, lawful sakes, you may intend and intend, and nothing comes of it but intending; one thing and another puts it off. The first time, when Benjamin went down, I had packed up to go, and the very day I had *such* a face—as big as a pumpkin—bigger than any Ben ever raised; and while they were hopping at the wedding, I had hops to my face instead. He! he! Witty, ain't I?—always was a cheerful disposition. Everybody I know sets store by me. They do, indeed!

Yes, 'twas a wedding Ben was going to; Peter Tizzle, my cousin Sarah's first husband, was going to marry again. What's that you say? How could he do it? To be sure, he! he! I mean she was his first wife, and he was going to take another—couldn't wait a decent time, of course, though she *was* a good wife to him—never knew anything against her, only she didn't

make his shirts as she ought—take up two and leave four threads, is the way to gather, and she didn't. Indeed, I have seen the tail hems run; but, no matter; she's gone. Well, *then*, I didn't go, though I mean to see 'em now, on account of my face, and so on. Once it was unexpected company, and once there was an accident on the road and I came back, though, to be sure, as I was half way there, I suppose I ran as much chance of being blown to atoms one way as the other.

After that I always felt scary about this traveling, and I wouldn't have come now if I hadn't wanted a new satin; the old one I'm going to quilt for a skirt. Ain't I a dear, good, industrious critter? My underclothes do me credit, I can tell you. A dozen skirts, and a dozen drawers, and fourteen flannel jackets, and eighteen —— other things, all scolloped round the sleeves and marked with my name, besides my nightgowns. Brought 'em all, for I calculate to stay awhile, and city washing won't do for *me!*

Where's Minty? Busy, eh? Won't she be rejoiced to see me? I keep her in such spirits, so lively, you know. If I hadn't been, I'd never lived to get here, goodness knows. The most dreadful cabman. The moment your husband comes home, Martha, I'll make him have him arrested. Man with a blue coat and a soft hat, and a wart on his nose. Don't you know him! No! Law! well John will, in a minute!

You see, when I came to the landing I thought it was Babel, not New York. Such a roaring, and howling, and banging, and thumping, and "Here you are, up Broadway!" and "Carry

your luggage!" and rattle, and scrape, and bang. I just stood still and wrung my hands, and says I, out loud:

"What did I come here, alone and unprotected, for? Oh, why didn't I stay at Perkinsburg, safe and comfortable?"

And, as I was speaking, up came this man—how queer you don't know him—and says he:

"Have a cab, ma'am? Take you safe as eggs in a basket!"

"Merciful goodness knows I will," says I, "if I can get into it. But what do you ask to take me to Cousin John Mawkins'?"

"Well," says he, "to any other person I'd say twelve dollars; but from an old lady so like my own mother I'd only take ten."

"Ten dollars, just to ride to Cousin John's?" says I.

Says he, "Things have gone up lately."

"Yes," says I, "they have. Butter is forty cents at Perkinsburg, but the stage don't charge but eighteen cents clear to Sprattown."

Says he, "Stages won't take your trunks in New York."

"Very well," says I, "they must go; couldn't leave 'em on the wharf until John's boys brought 'em up, for I'd never see 'em again—but *ten* dollars——"

"Nine and a half, then," says he, "though I'll go without my supper for it."

That I didn't believe, Martha, do you?

Well, I agreed. I think I'd agreed to anything to save myself from being crushed, for there was a market-wagon one side and a coal-cart on the other, and a carriage coming up behind, and four men with wheelbarrows coming the other way, right down on me.

Says I, "put me in, Mr. Cabman. Shut me up safe, and take me to Cousin John's." And, before I knew it, there I was on as nice a cushion, with a carpet for my feet, as ever you saw. And he put my trunks on, and gave me my carpet-bag, and acted up to that time like a gentleman. But he was a rascal all the same, for after he'd driven me not more than two blocks through a place where I suppose there'd been a riot, for sugar hogsheads laid all about, and boxes were piled up and tumbled over in heaps, he stops.

"Ma'am," says he, peeping in at the window in the roof, "where shall I drive to?"

"Cousin John Mawkins," says I.

"Where's that, ma'am?" says he.

"Oh, I forgot the street," says I, "but it's a long one, with brown-stone houses and high stoops."

Says he, "New York is full of such; please remember the name and number."

"Can't," says I. "But I've got it in my brown paper parcel on a card."

So I looked for the parcel, and, lo and behold, it wasn't there! Not on the seat nor on the floor.

"It's gone!" says I.

"Have to think where the house is, ma'am," says he.

So I thought, but it was like thinking of the multiplication-table when I went to school. I remembered all sorts of numbers, but couldn't tell which was the right one.

"I'm not sure it isn't number 25 Five-hundred-and-eighth street," says I.

"Ain't any street of that number," says he.

"Oh!" says I, "lawful sakes!"

"Perhaps it's eighth street," says he.

"No," says I.

Then, all of a sudden, I remembered and saw just as plain as day what he was doing.

Says I, "Ain't you ashamed, an able-bodied man like you, to try to cheat an old lady!"

"Haven't overcharged a cent," says he.

"'Tisn't overcharge," says I. "You know what I mean. You know the city, I don't; of course you know where John Mawkins lives."

"Is he a public man?" says he.

"I should think so," says I. "Kept a hardware store for twenty years before he retired and married Cousin Martha. He's got an awful long nose, sort o' askew, and gray eyes. About five feet six inches, and dyes his hair. They've got a daughter named Minty, and they wrote to me that she was being courted by a young man of the name of Brown. House is brown-stone, with a high stoop, they tell me. Now, don't pretend any more, but take me there. I ain't green, if I am from the country."

Says he—oh, what a wretch he was—

"I can't find it unless I have street and number, ma'am."

"You shall," says I.

"I'm very sorry, ma'am," says he, "but, perhaps you remember some other person you could go to?"

"To be sure," says I. "There's Cousin Fizzle and his sec

ond wife; and my niece Amanda, married to Oliver Pedge, a printer; and Mr. Twombly and his sister; and the Rev. Ozias Black, if he's living; and Miscindy Knobs, the dressmaker, if she hasn't caught a husband, which isn't likely, for she's as homely as a rail fence, and past thirty."

"Well," says he, "now we're all right. Where does any one of 'em live?"

"Don't *you* know?" says I.

"I don't," says he.

"Nor I neither," says I, "unless I had my letters here out of the old desk at home. I calculate Martha will take me to see them. Come, now, you *do* know. Our stage-driver at Perkinsburg knows everybody there."

"This is cutting it too fat, old lady," says he. "A fellow can't know all New York. If you can't remember a number, p'raps you'll go to a hotel."

"No," says I; "you're paid to take me to John Mawkins', and here I'll sit until you do."

At that he got into a rage, and down he climbed and opened the door.

"I sha'n't charge you for these two blocks," says he. "Will you take your money back and get out? Maybe sitting on your trunks will bring back your memory, ma'am."

"I won't get out," says I.

"Then you'll go to a hotel?"

"No taverns for me," says I.

Then he swore—he did, indeed—right at me.

He shut the door and went away a moment, and when he came back a military gentleman was with him—a splendid man, with a dark blue uniform, with brass buttons, and a thingumyjig with a chain on his breast. Says he, just like a military man—rough and ready, you know—

"Hallo, now! what's the muss?"

Said I, "Thank you for asking, general; it's this man—pretends to be a cab-driver, and don't know any one in New York."

The driver struck in then and explained matters his own way, and the military gentleman says:

"My good lady, you must really go to a hotel."

"If it's your advice, general, I'll go," says I.

Then he says, "All right—go ahead, driver."

Driver says, "Take you to the Astor, ma'am?"

Says I, "One's as good as the other. I suppose they can tell me there."

"Yes," says the man, and away we drove.

Well, at the hotel out came two men and took in my things polite as could be, and a black man in a white apron bowed to me as if I was a queen. Since the abolition times there's no knowing who a colored person may be, so I courtesied back, and says I to the driver:

"I want my money back. The bargain was to take me to Cousin John's."

He only put his finger to his nose and drove off. I couldn't run after a carriage and horses, you know. So that's the last I saw of 'em.

Then says I to the colored gentleman, "You're proprietor of this tavern, ain't you?"

Says he, "Not exactly, ma'am, but I'm a waiter."

"Well," says I, "I ain't come to stay—only jest to ask the way to Cousin John Mawkins'. "Where does he live?"

He grinned, and says he, "Look in the directory, ma'am," and he brought me a book with names in it, and I turned over a good many pages and couldn't find Mawkins.

"Well," says I, "guess it isn't here."

"Every name in the city is in," says he.

Says I, "I'll have to stop a week to read this through. I always thought the people at a tavern knew where folks lived."

He bowed, and grinned again, and he took the book, and says he:

"M, Ma, Maw——"

"Mawkins," says I.

"Mawkins Robert, Mawkins Peter, Mawkins John," says he. "Here it is, ma'am," and out he reads the number, all right.

Says I, "Very much obliged," and I went to the door and waved my umbrella to a cabman opposite. A whole row of 'em stood there opposite a garden with iron railings, and a filthy, dirty white house with a clock on the cupola in the middle, and I must say the colored man was polite, all but grinning, for he put me into the cab.

Just as I was getting in, he says:

"Beg pardon, ma'am, there's something pinned to your dress."

And behold, there, fastened by a big darning needle, with a

sealing-wax head, which I have for a shawl-pin, was my paper parcel, just as I had fastened it for safety, with my own hands.

If I'd had it I'd have saved my money and got here two hours ago. This cabman only charged me five dollars, good, honest fellow, and he told me the other was a cheat. Of course he wa. !

And here I am at last, all safe, though I never expected to be. And who do you suppose the military gentleman was? Long brown beard, blue eyes, cap, blue coat with brass buttons, and a kind of a shiny thing with a chain on his bosom. Do you think it was General Grant, or Sherman, or Hooker? La! a police officer? Don't say so! Why if I had known that I could have had the driver taken up then, couldn't I? What a pity!

NUMBER TWO.

MISS CHARITY GRINDER'S SHOPPING EXCURSION.

I'm Martha Mawkins. I'm not particularly fond of writing. Nobody ever called me a blue-stocking, thank goodness. But when your feelings are worked upon, and your husband does not sympathize with you (John Mawkins never does), but says "bother!" and "stuff and nonsense," you naturally have recourse to the papers. And I have had the most *terrific* day. I've been out shopping with cousin Charity Grinder. Yes, she's here—been here two days; and if she could, she'd keep me in the street all the time, I believe.

She has a yellow shawl, my dear, and some kind of a cotton-back velvet bonnet, made in the year one, with blue roses, and a ruche with a green edge (why *do* milliners do such things?), and a vail all big scollops, and tambour work or cotton net, just as brown can be; and, oh, dear! oh, my! oh! a pair of leather boots, with great brass tags to the lacings hanging down them, and a pair of blue worsted stockings that you can see *ever* so much of, for her common poplin "gown," as she calls it, is above her ankles. How I feel when my friends meet us!

'Tisn't so long since Mawkins made his money, that I quite dare to do as I like and be sure no one will say, "You can't expect any better; you know what she was used to."

If she only would not go to Stewart's, where there is sure to be some one you know, I shouldn't so much care.

She came down dressed this morning, with her two-handled basket and cotton umbrella, and told me what she wanted. I tried to stop her.

"You must be *so* tired, cousin," said I; just give me the list and I'll shop for you."

"No," said she. "I'm a spry body—none of your lazy folks. I came to New York to see things, and not to sleep, and I've seen so much of Mr. Stewart's store, I'm bound to get a dress there. Is he dear?"

"Dreadful," said I.

I wanted to frighten her from going.

"Ah!" said she. "I'll beat him well down then; see if I don't."

"They have only one price, Cousin Charity," cried I frightened out of my wits.

"So they all say," said she, with *such* a wink; "but I know better, Cousin Martha.

Well, we set out. Everybody we met she would nod to, and then say:

"Who's that? Don't know, eh? Why, what an unsociable place New York is. I know everybody in Perkinsburg."

At last we got to Stewart's—Mrs. Nobs' carriage at the door,

of course—and in walked Cousin Charity, tumbling over Mrs. Nobs, who was coming out.

"How are you, love?" says Mrs. Nobs, never guessing Charity came with me. "I declare I've been trampled down by a great vulgar woman. Why can't they keep stores of this kind more exclusive?"

Charity saw me talking to some one, and came back.

"How do you, ma'am?" said she to Mrs. Nobs. "Out a shoppin', I reckon. How's calico?"

"The idea!" screamed Mrs. Nobs. "My love, I shall really give up going out at all."

"Don't you have your health, ma'am, or are you afraid of being run over?" asked Charity.

I saw it was time to come to the rescue; so I said, with a glance at Mrs. Nobs:

"Miss Charity Grinder, from Perkinsburg, my dear."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Nobs, "I didn't know really."

"How are you?" said Charity. "Glad to know you, or any friend of Marthy's. I'm her first cousin. Her father and mine were brothers, kept the same bakery together for ten years, and married sisters. After that Silas, that's her father, went into the flour business and made money. I'm going to buy a dress, and some wrappers, and half a dozen pairs of stockings for Sunday-go-to-meeting wear. Common ones I knit, but I took a notion to some boughten for best."

Mrs. Nobs lifted her eyebrows.

"By-by, love," said she. She hates me like poison; but she

always says 'love.' "I'm in such haste I can't stay. See you at the opera Wednesday, I hope;" and right glad was I to see her go. But, goodness! from bad to worse was all I had to hope for that day. There was Cousin Charity shaking hands with all the shopmen at the first counter.

"How are you?" she said. "I don't know which is the boss, but I'm glad to be acquainted. Only come down two days ago, or I should have been here before I calculate to do all my shopping here while I stay, and so I came over with Cousin Marthy to get acquainted."

Then she happened to see three or four little cash boys, and down on them she pounced.

"Mr. Stewart's little sons, I suppose," she said. "Dear me, how near of an age—some of 'em must be twins. Come here, my dears, and kiss me; I am Aunty Grinder from Perkinsburg."

And she did kiss them, as true as I'm a sinner, every one of them in sight. People were staring at her as if she were a show. Then she turned to a young man who was measuring lace, and asked him if they "had any calico."

"Because if there isn't any I'll come to-morrow," she said. "I'm visiting, and haven't anything to do."

It was an excuse to get her away, and soon she was looking at prints, and busy enough to keep quiet for five minutes.

"What d'ye ask for this, now?" said she, at last.

"That pattern," said the shopman she spoke to, "is seventy-five cents.

"For a calico!" cried Charity. "Well I never—that's too much."

"We have cheaper qualities," said the young man.

"I thought so," said Charity, winking at me. "What's this?"

"Thirty-five cents, ma'am."

"Pretty enough, ain't it, Marthy?"

"Oh, yes," said I "I'd take it."

"Not at that price," said Charity. "Come, now—eighteen cents."

"We are not allowed to abate, ma'am."

And really, I thought that young man would choke with laughter; he tried so hard to keep it in.

"Twenty, then."

He shook his head.

"Well, I'll give you twenty-five, not a cent more," said Charity.

"The price is five-and-thirty," said the clerk.

"Then I won't buy to-day," said Charity, and she whispered to me, "now he'll come down."

The clerk only folded up the goods. Charity moved away slowly. When she was about four feet from the counter she looked back.

"Did you speak?" said she.

"No, ma'am,' said the clerk.

"Haven't changed your mind?"

"No, ma'am."

She went a little farther, and then went back.

"I'll take it," said she; "but I won't come here again. You ought to come down a little—I wouldn't have been too hard to deal with. Even Moses Aaron, who sells snuff, comes down a penny a pound at Perkinsburg."

She went away with her bundle under her arm, after giving a penny to the cash boy, and calling him a good little fellow for running so fast. And the next thing I knew she was walking into a long mirror. In fact, she came against it with such force that I thought it was broken at first.

"Lawful suz!" she said, as she picked herself up.

She had been knocked down, and sat on the floor a minute.

"Lawful suz! only a looking-glass. Well, it is a mercy 'tisn't mashed and I all cut to pieces. Who would have thought it? I was looking, and looking, with all my eyes at a lady dressed in things just like mine, and wondering why she didn't move out of the way, when up I came, bumperty bang against the looking-glass. Don't mind laughing, ladies and gentlemen, I'm a good-natured soul, and you won't hurt my feelings. Marthy, I didn't show my ankles, did I?"

There was no stopping her. I just let her go, and I followed on as far off as I dared, and she priced everything, and tried to cheapen everything she priced, until she came to the elevator. My back was turned, when suddenly I heard some one scream:

"Oh, Marthy, Marthy, I'm going up chimbly! I'm going up chimbly! Save me! save me! Oh! oh! oh!"

And how she came to sit there I don't know, but Charity was

in the elevator, perched on a bale of goods that was going to an upper story. I *was* frightened for the moment, but two gentlemen ran up stairs to arrest the progress of the elevator, and a little cash boy was sent down, and when I got to the third floor they had Charity out, and had given her a glass of water, and she was thanking them and inviting them all to tea whenever they came to Perkinsburg.

"Such an awful skeer," she said, as I sat down, and for all I was ashamed, laughed until I cried.

"Such a skeer; I thought the old boy had remembered my sins, at last, and was now taking me up chimbly. These gentlemen say it's only an elevator—but keep me from elevators forever more."

After this performance poor Charity really was tired out, and and allowed me to put her in an omnibus and take her home.

She's home now, thank goodness, telling her adventures to the rest of the family while I am writing them, and I hope they enjoy them more than your afflicted

MARTHA MAWKINS.

NUMBER THREE.

MISS CHARITY GRINDER VISITS BENJAMIN CLOOT'S FOLKS.

How are you, Peggy? Didn't tell you I was comin' to give you a pleasant surprise. I'm stoppin' reglar to Cousin Sarah's, but I'm goin' about visitin'. How's your ma? Washin', eh? Well la! I allers used to say Miss Cloot was allers washin' when she wasn't bakin'. I find she hain't changed a mite. How are we all? Well I'm to be crawlin', and brother's amazin' smart for his age. Hain't had a rheumatiz yet. He's the oldest of the family, you know—twenty years my senior.

How's shoemakin'? Glad to hear it's good. I shall give Ben an order for a pair of them long-legged boots before I go.

Law, now, you ain't got up in this world like Sary's companion, hev you? He's made a fortune, and lives in the biggest house I ever sot foot in, with a lot of darkies to cut around and bother. As for *workin'*, I'd do all the bilin' of 'em the week through in one day, and like the exercise. But Sary says to be fashionable you've got to hev any number o' helps, and that culled persons is more stylish.

You don't visit, I hear. Lor', you'd oughter. When he sot up business your grandfather lent him the money. You ain't

exactly relatives, but his first cousin's second wife's brother-in-law married your aunt's nephew by marriage's daughter-in-law's sister; so you are kinder connected in the bonds of sanguanimity, and orter be intimate. She'd be real glad to see you, she said, only she reckoned you felt sort o' sot up, and didn't keer to cultivate sociabilitude.

Never thought of sich a thing. Well, so I told 'em.

Seems to me you've got over much room, though, and I can't tell why you sot up here on the fourth floor. Kinder wears yer limbs out on the stairs I calkerlate. Hey! Marsy sakes! Three other families in the house, du tell. They told me folks lived one a top of the other in York; but I reckoned it was a hoax.

Well, York *is* a queer place, and now you are here, Miss Cloot, I'll tell you what's happened to me. I started out to come here at nine o'clock—meant to be early—and as I had shoppin' to du, meant to walk it. While I'm thinking on it, don't you never shop in Stewart's—ef you know where he keeps. I went there with Sary, and got took up chimbly in what they called an elewator. Marsy I ever came down.

Well, I started to walk, with directions writ down in my pocket-book, and soon I came to the widest street you ever see—full of wagons, and carriages, and folks, and seen Broadway on a lamp-post. Sary told me to cross Broadway, and walk along Grand street to the Bowery, so I knowed my road. But goodness! how was I to do it?

Cross! why nobody could cross without wings. Well, I stood

staring and wondering, and my head buzzing for all the world like a hive of bees, when up comes a gentleman in brass coat and blue buttons. No, I mean t'other way, blue coat and brass buttons, and stands aside me. When I fust come down I took 'em for officers in the milingtary; but Sary says they're police-men. So just fancy my horror when this here one cotches hold on me.

"Come along, mum," says he. "Hurry up, now; don't poke."

Then I knowed I was under arrest, and began to holler.

"Oh, I ain't done nothin'. I never *did* do nothin' to be took up for. I'm innocent as a babe unborn."

And I pounded him with my bag, until I reckon he was black and blue.

Folks stopped and didn't say nothin'. Kinder grinned and stared a bit, and suddenly a thought struck me.

They said Catholics was gainin' power in York, and this was a new inquisition, and they was carryin' me off to torture as a martyr with thumb-screws and pincers for bein' a good Baptist.

So with that I felt kind of inspired with zeal, and says I:

"Do your worst, fiend, you can't make me remunerate; I'll die a saint."

"Is she crazy, poor dear," says a lady.

Says the policeman: "No'm. The tarnal old goose thinks she's took up, because I offered to take her across, when she was tryin' to get herself run over."

Says the lady—such a nice woman with a little round hat and spangles in her net;

"Poor dear; she's from the country, no doubt. It's a custom here, ma'am, for the police force to escort ladies over Broadway."

"Is it," says I; "Oh, what a relief. I never *was* so skeered. Now," says I, turnin', on the policeman, "escort me across if it's your duty, and don't give me no impudence. Mind."

Then he laughed, and law how he *did* hustle me over, right under the horses' noses, to be sure.

But when I was safe over, that nice lady came along side, and says she:

"Hope you ain't none the wuss for your skeer?"

"Oh, no," says I, "I'm not particularly nervous, thank ye."

Says she, "From the country, ma'am?"

"Yes'm," says I. "Du tell how you guessed it."

Says she, "From the quiet dignitude of your appearance. New York ladies has in general a sort of boldish look. Then," says she, "Shopping?"

Says I, "Yes'm, I've got twenty dollars along with me to buy some goods with. D'ye know any cheap place?"

Says she, "Oh, yes. Now there's one around the corner; come with me."

So we went, and she was so polite she offered me her arm, which I took.

Pretty soon we came to a shop door, but behold, it was closed.

"Dear me," says she, "they must be gone out. Wait a minute, and I'll run in the side door and call the gentleman's wife. She'll show *us* the things, though she wouldn't everybody. Don't stir until I come back."

Well, she went away, and I waited and waited until a gentleman from next door, in a barber's shop, came out.

Says he, "Waiting for some one, ma'am?"

"My sakes," says I; "I should think I was. That lady you might have seen with me has gone to have the door opened; and she *does* stay, I'll say that!"

Says he, "A friend o' yourn?"

"Says I, "Well, very recent," and I told him how we came to be together. Then he looked solemn, and, says he:

"Madam, have you lost anything?"

"Well," says I, "I hope not. Why?"

Says he, "I abhor speaking ill of the fair sex, but I'm obliged to say, ma'am, that that lady ain't what ladies ought to be. She's pretty well known as a female pickpocket, and if your money was to be come at, she's got it."

I stuck my hand in my pocket, and, massy me! my purse was gone! It turned me as cold as ice to find it out, and I would have fainted if he hadn't taken me in his store and handed me a cologne bottle.

Seemed as if I couldn't believe that magnificent critter, dressed like a queen, was a thief.

I hadn't a cent left, but the barber gentleman was so polite. He put me on a car and paid my fare, and I asked him to Sary's daughter's party. That's his card:

"MR. JAZEY, WIG-MAKER AND HAIR-DRESSER."

And now I've come to the pint.

Sary's eldest daughter—Florabel Elizabethina—is about havin'

a party, and I want you to come—sha'n't take no for an answer —the whole of you, children and all, and any neighbor you'd like to fetch. You'd ought to be on visitin' terms, seein' your aunt's nephew by marriage's daughter-in-law's sister married his first cousin's second wife's brother. It's night after next, and there's the biggest plum-cake home a'ready, and goodies is goin' to be in by wagons full.

Du come. I'm sure my polite barber will be there, and if he's single he'll be a splendid match for Marthy Jane. I'll introduce 'em.

Well, I'd like to stay to tea, but I can't to-day. They're goin' to have company at Sary's this evening, and they'll want me to to help entertain. I'll tell you when I'll come at the party. Don't forget to come, and *do* bring the children—Sary will be delighted.

Good-by! It's the front house from the corner; and I'd dress up, if I were you, in my best, 'cause they're awful stuck up at Sary's.

NUMBER FOUR

MISS CHARITY GRINDER AT A PARTY.

I wish Miss Charity Grinder would please to—well—to marry —I won't say anything worse; and when she does marry, I hope it will be some reverend gentleman, who is going to India or some other horrid place, as a missionary, without the slightest intention of coming back again.

Poor man, what a life she'll lead him!

The impudence of that woman is beyond all. I never saw her equal. She exhibited it in the first place by coming here without invitation. She tormented poor sister Martha first, and when she was completely worn out—I always shall believe she gave Charity my direction—she says she didn't; but how could she get it, I'd like to know?

However it was, we were waked up at five in the morning by *such* a ringing of the bell, and there, if you'll believe me, when I looked out of the window in my nightcap, was Charity, in the milkman's wagon.

"He! he! he!" she screamed, as she looked up. "Surprised, ain't ye, I started off early so's to get here to breakfast, and on the way I met this here gentleman, and he said he

served you, so I asked him for a lift. Sick, ain't you? No. Why, law, you don't lie abed till this time, do you? I got up, darned a pair o' stockings, patched a petticoat, and dressed an hour ago. I never was one of your sleepy heads, thank fortin', but I suppose York folks spend the heft of their time abed. I've heer'd so."

And all that, my dears, before she got out of the wagon.

I roused Mr. Perkins up, and sent him down to open the door, and, upon my word, the creature had ever so much luggage with her, and had come to stay a week.

The first thing Florabella Alice said to me when she heard it, was :

"Oh, ma, what will we do with her at our party?"

And I just sat down and folded my hands, for I knew Charity of old, and there is no managing her.

Stay she would, and stay she did, and my only comfort was that she spent the time running around the streets, shopping and hunting up all sorts of people ; though, if I had known what would come of that, I'd have watched her better. Goodness knows, my hope was that she would be somewhere on a visit when the party came off, and would not be able to get back ; but I might have known better.

She kept the day and the hour in her mind, and had an outlandish blue and green dress made over for the occasion, The thing had only five breadths in the skirt, and she took one of those out for waist and sleeves ; so you can fancy it. I never saw such a thing in all my life. However, queer as she looked,

there are almost as queer-looking people in society—literary folks, and musical people, and so forth. So I decided to speak of her as a literary lady of immense wealth, from the country, and to invite old Mr. Ginger, who is so deaf he would not be shocked by her bad grammar, and set them down to play chess together in the extension-room, and tried to make the best of the matter, though, dear knows, my heart sank, as it well might, at the prospect before me.

Ours was to be rather an extensive affair, you see. Young Billiwinkle being particular to Florabella Alice, we thought it best to do something to show the Billiwinkles we were able to cut a dash if we chose, for the Billiwinkles are very fashionable, and astonishingly aristocratic, and we had (even at the risk of offending some very good souls) invited only our most genteel acquaintances. Not a vulgar, crowded affair, you know, but just a nice, elegant assemblage, with room for dancing, and a supper that (to tell the truth) cost much more than we could well afford. It was a fine one though.

Well, the evening came, and there was Miss Charity, in her blue and green, with the four breadths, which I (what hypocrites we are sometimes) told her was "lovely," and then first of all, thank goodness, came that blessed Mr. Ginger, and I had them out of sight at chess in the extension-room in a twinkling. The Billiwinkles came early. Horace Billiwinkle never was so attentive to Florabella. I really did fancy he was on the very point of asking the momentous question.

What a very fine woman Mrs. Billiwinkle looks for one of her

years, and how nicely she covers the bald spot on her head with her real lace cap; and I really could not discover whether the twist was all her own or mixed.

Young Billiwinkle walked about the parlors with Florabella, and Mr. McGlinderby's brother, young Ogle, offered Cornelia Japonica his arm, and I did think they would make the most charming couple. In fact, my girls were lovely, and the rooms tastefully arranged, and I was looking my best, and the assemblage was so elegant that I actually was proud, and forgot about Charity, when, behold, in she stalked, and plumped herself down between Mrs. Billiwinkle and Mrs. Highflier, who both looked at her in astonishment.

"Miss Grinder," I said, and whispered to Mrs. B. "A rich literary lady from the country."

"Indeed," said she. "Happy to make you're acquaintance, I'm sure."

"Same to you," said Charity. "I've got sick of yelling at that old gentleman. Besides, I hate chess—only larnt it to keep brother Jonathan *in* evenings. Better than going to the tavern, I reckon. Because when they do go, they don't allers come as they went, and chess sends 'em up stairs sleepy, early."

"Ha, ha! so witty," said Mrs. Billiwinkle.

Charity burst out on the instant with:

"Excuse the question, but where did you get them teeth?"

"Ma'am!" exclaimed Mrs. Billiwinkle. "I really——"

"Reason I asked is old Granny Gobble is going to get a set, and I thought I'd price for her, seein' I was down. Your'n is amazin' white. There—that's him—I know."

What she meant I didn't know, but just then the door-bell rung, and in a minute more the colored waiter announced "Mr. Jazey."

"I knowed it," cried Charity; "a friend of mine. Here, come in, Mr. Jazey. This here, ladies and gentlemen, is a gentleman that was very perlite to me on occasion of bein' nabbed day before yesterday. I forget your Christian name, but the last is Jazey. I asked him up to-night partly because one good turn deserves another, and I thought as Florabella and Cornelia wears such a lot of false hair, and Mr. Perkins has a wig, 'twould be a good thing for him to know the family. Set down, Mr. Jazey, and make yerself to hum. Supper is a'most ready, and if you are as starved as I be, you're ready for it. But then we didn't have nothin' but cold pork and bread and butter for dinner to-day."

The man made a bow, and sat down. He really behaved very well, and there was no excuse for turning him out; and I have seen Cubans almost as dark. Maybe he *was* one. I hope so. But to see Mrs. Billiwinkle stare, and young Billiwinkle put up his eye-glass, was dreadful. Nobody spoke until the good-natured Miss Highflier suggested that "the weather was warm for the season," to which the dark-complexioned hairdresser, thinking he was spoken to, replied:

"Yes, miss, I find pomatum very ily, and it does take lots of trouble to make straight hair wave. Excuse me, but waves would be exceedingly becoming to you, miss."

No one answered, but somebody giggled, and Mrs. Billi-

winkle whispered something about "taking French leave," when the bell rang again, and there was such a hubbub in the hall that I thought the house was on fire. Charity clapped her hands.

"Now there is a surprise for you," she squealed. "Jest listen, Sary; don't you know that voice? Come along in, Mr. Cloot and the hull of you," and in marched a little short man and a giant of an old woman, and two girls in low necks, and a boy of fifteen, and stood there bowing and courtesying. I thought I should drop.

"This is some mistake," I gasped. "I never met those good people before. You are looking for some other person, I presume."

"No, we hain't," said the man; "we're old friends growed out of knowledge. I'm Mr. Cloot, and this is Mrs. Cloot, and here's the girls and boys. We thought, seein' you was so perlite as to send a invitation, we'd all come, and let by-gones be by-gones. Ef the old man didn't pay me for what he bought, 'tain't your fault, and I didn't owe nobody no grudge—'tain't my way."

And then I *did* remember him—that dreadful shoemaker and his wife. I really couldn't speak. Charity looked and grinned.

"You're kinder connections by marriage, you know," she said; "and so, as there seems to be suthin' partickler between him and her,"—and she pointed to young Billiwinkle and Florabella—"all hands ought to know each other."

Mrs. Billiwinkle gave a little scream.

"I'm so very ill, dear Mrs. Perkins, that I'm obliged to leave," she said. "Horace, you'll see me home, of course," and anctually the woman took her son's arm and walked out of the room without another word.

The young ladies followed, and in ten minutes those toadying Tibbets and Mrs. Mason Podhammer were gone also. Good-natured little Miss Highflier kept a good many there by remaining. I knew if she had stirred the rooms would have been empty in ten minutes.

I really thought Florabella would faint, and I wouldn't have had her give way to her feelings for the world. But there was one of the shoemaker's freckled daughters already perched on the music stool, banging away and singing "Tramp, tramp, tramp," because Charity had asked if "Lucindy wouldn't give the folks a tune," and the shoemaker's wife, with her feet on the register, informing the guests generally that it was so damp out that she really had muddled her stockings; while the man himself, with the head of a cane half way down his throat, was staring Florabella out of countenance.

I whispered to Mrs. Perkins, "Please, dear, for goodness, sake, let us have supper. Maybe when they're gone they'll go like anacondas," which Mr. Perkins had the cruelty to joke about at the awful moment, and to tell me, "Just the reverse —anacondas *can't* go when they're gorged."

But we did go down to supper, and when some of the young gentlemen—who made a regular joke of the matter, I could see—asked "Miss Lucindy" if she would have some oysters,

she screamed, "Guess I *will*—I'm allers around when there's anything to eat—and I'm death on oysters!"

Oh, it was awful! All the children were perched up at the table, and fought for the jellies. One hit the other with a spoon, and the other threw a knife at him. The great boy reached across and helped himself and his mother, and the shoemaker ate as though he was determined to get the amount of his bill out of the poor departed grandpa somehow; until at last the whole table was doing nothing but stare at them.

Poor Mr. Jazey behaved uncommonly well, and was doing the polite to one they called "Araminty," when that horrible fifteen-year-old caught sight of him. The instant he did, he tucked up his sleeves, turned down his collar, and whistled, "Whey! Wall, I never did! Look a-here, dad."

"Dad" looked up.

"*That's* a moke," he said, pointing to Mr. Jazey.

"A *what?*" whispered Miss Highflier. "Dear me, what does the boy mean? Does he want anything to drink or to eat? I don't about much know such people. But I'm sorry for you, Mrs. Perkins. I'd do anything I could to stop him!" and the girl meant it

But the boy was not to be stopped.

"That's a nig!" he said. "Look here, you, ain't you the nigger barber that lives down our way?—like your impudence to come here. Dad, are you goin' to stand it, or will you pitch him out?"

The shoemaker stopped to scrape his plate clean with his knife, which he licked all over, and then stood up.

"Minty, come over here," he said. "Gals, get your bonnets—Mat, you come along. I ain't a man to hinder my neighbors from 'sociating with who they wish; but this here I say, I ain't no advocate of mixin' up. Like with like, says I, and no 'malgamating. Cullud pussons ain't for me, and if I'd know'd they was axed, I wouldn't hev come. I don't consider it no compliment from Mrs. Perkins to give us an invite along with such, though knowin' what I knows of Miss Grinder, I reckon her too much of a lady to be a party to it."

And away he marched, driving the children, with their hands full of pastry, before him, and collaring the boy who was going round and round with his arms, and dancing before that unfortunate hair-dresser.

Florabella was in a swoon on the sofa, and Cornelia was weeping in the extension-room, and people were getting their things and going off as if they enjoyed the fun amazingly, and all the servants were grinning, and my last remembrance of the evening was a kind of pandemonium full of laughing faces, and sneering voices, and tears, and broken glass, and bits of pastry, and oysters all over the cloth, and charlotte russe that had been fought for by the shoemaker's boys on the floor, and that biggest boy sparring at the dark-complexioned hair-dresser, and the girl and their mother scolding together.

The morning after I came down stairs determined to rid the house of Charity Grinder, and I did it. She went off in a huff, and when I locked the door after her I vowed she should never re-enter it.

But what's the use of that? It can't undo the evening's work. We're the laughing stock of our set. Mrs. Billiwinkle has quite cut us, and Horace Billiwinkle has ceased to pay the least attention to Florabella Alice. Poor dear girl! It would have been *such* a good thing for her!

NUMBER FIVE.

CHARITY HAS A RIDE.

New York is an awful wicked place. I never expected to see such carrying on, nor to be treated as I hev been treated since I came here. You can't go into the street without suthin terrible happening to ye. I wouldn't advise no unprotected female lady for to come here on no account.

Last Wednesday's a week, I thought, seein' I was here, I'd go to Barnum's Museum, and, to tell the truth, Sary wasn't friends with me on account of my giving an invitation to a person that kept a barber-shop, and turned out to be colored. How on arth was I to know if he would be so light? I'm sartin sure that a gentleman that comes to see her Florabella is ever so much darker, and they call him a Cuban, and sot all creation by him. I made matters worse than they was before by tellin' Sary so, and, land alive, you'd a thought they wanted to eat me without salt. They can't make me mad, though. I'm goin' to hev my visit out. There ain't no more eligible place to go. The livin' is the best, and the spare bedroom is fitted up splendid, and there's lots of company. Ef they don't 'preciate me, tain't my fault; there's other folks that does; and ef I stay long

enough I may make my market yet. Who's to know my age unless I tell 'em? And I'd like to step off, ef 'twas only to spite Mrs. Peter Cuen, the widdy up our way that I had the squabble with at the last fancy fair, when she had the impudence to say nuthin' more was to be expected of old maids.

But, lawful suz—where am I? I sot out to tell about my adventure, and here I be, talking about Mrs. Peter Cuen. I wasn't thinking of her when I sot out for Barnum's.

I asked Sary how I sho uld get there, and she said: "Take a Broadway stage; and as I knowed where Broadway was, I didn't ask no more questions, but left her to her sulks and marched off.

Sure as I live I thought I went the right way, but it appears I didn't, for after I'd hailed a stage and got in, and rid upward of an hour, I says to a gentleman opposite me:

"Be so kind, sir, as to tell me when we're to Barnum's."

He had a little eye-glass dangling from his neck, that he hadn't used before, but he took and stuck it on his nose, when I spoke, and give me a good stare, and dusted his lilac gloves together, and twirled his mustache, and says he:

"Aw-aw. Weally!"

Kinder made me mad, you know.

"Here," says I, "if you're deaf, say so. I asked you to tell me when we come to Barnum's, and I reckon if you're too dumb to know, there's smarter folks than you be in this conveyance."

All the goose said, was, "Bawnum's? weally, eh!"

Says I, "You in the corner—young man with the red hair and a wart on your nose—where is Barnum's Museum?"

And he answered up real smart—though I don't see what there was for the whole conglomeration of 'em to laugh at:

"You're entirely out of your way, ma'am."

"Gracious," says I, "I hope not."

"We're at South ferry," says he, "but I'll direct you," and then he handed me out as polite as possible. It wasn't his fault that it was into a mud pile as big as a haystack, but the driver's. Drivers are the most aggravatin' class in York, I swan to man.

Well, this young man with the wart on his nose and the red head, stood full five minutes tellin' me to turn to the right, and go up this street, and turn to the left, and cross thingummy street, and pass what's-his-name Hall. But I knew about as much at the eend as I did at the beginning, and my head was spinning round like a teetotum. I was glad to have him leave off directions so't I could think which way I was to go, and off I went in a hurry—the wrong way, it seems, for fust I come to a market, and then to wharves, and everywhere they kept directing me to Broadway, and it only seemed to send me further away. I was jist beat out and mad, I was, as hop. Every livin' thing I had on was splattered with mud, and I lost my overshoes twice in the gutters.

At last I came to a baker's store, and there they told me I'd strayed to t'other eend o' creation.

"I'm allers sorry for a lady that has lost herself in New York," says the lady in the shop, "and our wagon is jist drivin' over to Broadway, so it you like to get in, the man will take you."

Of course I was willing, so clumb in with many thanks,

though mebbe ef I hadn't remembered my manners I'd have got along better; for while I was wavin' my hand and invitin' her to call on me to Sary's, off I slipped, as flat as a pancake, in the mud. Ef York mud wasn't like a feather bed I'd have been killed; but, lawful suz, as it was, I was as ef I'd been plastered, and they got a broom and swept me off before they'd let me get in the wagon agin.

When I did get in I was most jolted to death, and the flour stuck to me where I had been dipped in the mud. So't I made up my mind to go straight hum and wait till Sary got over her sulks and could go along with me to Barnum's.

When I got to Broadway I knowed I could find Sary's, for all the stages run past her corner. But it so happened the baker didn't go clear to Broadway, and when he sot me down, he says:

"Just go straight ahead and you'll come to it all safe, and get into the fust stage you see."

So ahead I went, and soon came to a street with the names all askew on the lamp-posts, and fixed so mortal eyes couldn't read 'em, for all the world as if it was suthin in the pockets of them as fixed 'em to bewilder strangers. Seemed to me it looked like Broadway, though, so I turned into it.

'Twas horrid dirty, and every house that wasn't a rum shop was a pawnbroker's, and most of the population was a heap darker complected than my poor barber, and the heft of 'em tipsy.

I hadn't gone far before I came to the conclusion 'twasn't Broadway after all, and I cut down a cross street, and went on walkin' until, lo and behold, I saw a stage standin' before a big

house with lamps at the door, and jest stood still and clasped my hands, I was so thankful. There was a lot of boys about the door waitin' for suthin, and I asked one:

"What house is this, sonny?"

Says he, "Station-house, missus."

Of course I calkerlated it was the stage station. Can't be wrong, thinks I, and in I jumped and sot down in the corner. It was an awful black old stage, with windows like blind shutters, and smelt awful of tobacco. But York is such a dirty, bad-smellin' place, I couldn't feel surprised at a little extra disgustableness, and the fact of the matter was that Sary havin' told me all the Broadway stages passed their corner, I felt safe on my way hum. Perhaps—though it's what I never did before—I may have dozed a bit, while I was waiting for the other passengers. I waked up when they got in—two ladies and three gentlemen—and I couldn't help noticin' how rude the policeman that handed 'em in acted—wuss, if that can be, than them that acts as beaux over Broadway, though they way they push and drag is a caution, and I couldn't help thinking that New Yorkers was the most disreputable-lookin' set of critters above ground.

One gentleman was rigged up amazin' fine, to be sure, but he had a black eye and a bruise on his cheek, and t'other gentleman looked as ef somebody had been trying to pull what clothes he had off him, and the last one actually was the wuss for liquor. As for the ladies, one hadn't combed her hair for a week, I'm sure, and t'other was cryin' fit to kill herself.

Says I, "What's the matter with you, young gal? Anythin'

happened to ye? Got hurt, anyhow?" And she looked 'round, and says she:

"I wish there had—I wish I was dead."

"Law," says I, "that's wicked. We'd orter submit to circumstances." And then the lady that hadn't combed her hair for a length o' time sot on to laugh.

"Ha, ha!" says she. "Nuthin ails her only she's goin' up the first time. I bellowed when I had my first year, but I don't care tenpence now. What are *you* up for?"

"Me!" says I—though I couldn't make any sense out of what she said. "Me? Well, I meant to go to Barnum's, but I begin to feel beat out, so I'm goin' to Sary's, where I'm stoppin'. Please tell me when we get to the corner o' Twenth-fifth street, for that's my place."

She stared at me like a crazy woman, and then bust out a laughin'.

"Thought you didn't look altogether right," says she. "Where did you come from?"

"Jest a few miles from Peekskill," says I.

"Where do you suppose you're goin' now?" says she, laughing.

"Well," says I, "ef this is a Broadway stage, I kalkerlate to go to Twenty-fifth street."

I was getting skeered—the passengers stared so at me.

"Who put you in here?" says the woman, after a minute.

"Wal, I saw the stage waitin', and didn't stop to be put—I got in," says I.

Then, I regret to say it, but it can't be helped, that woman used an immoral expression. In fact, she swore, and says she:

"The old gal hain't a notion where she is, I'll bet tenpence."

"Meanin' *me*, ma'am," says I.

"Of course," says she.

"If them's York manners, give me Hottentots," says I. "They know better than to call strange ladies *old gals*. I'll get out and walk the rest, sooner than ride along with such company. Pull the check," says I, "some o' you men," and I tried the door, but it was shut tight. "Let me out, driver," I hollered, and somebody on the ruff called back:

"Hold your noise in there."

"I'll write to the *Herald*," says I, "and to the *Tribune*, and to the rest of the papers. Can't you stop when I say so? I'll pay your fare as soon as I see you," and I banged the door with my umbrella.

The man in the ragged clothes spoke up then, and says he:

"'Tain't no use, old lady. If you hev got in by mistake, you've got to stay. They're used to noises and poundings. They won't stop until they're ready."

"Land o' Goshen!" says I, "what du you mean—ain't this a Broadway stage?"

"It's the Black Maria," says he.

"Well," says I, "I'd name my stage arter white folks ef I run one. But that's all taste. Where does this here go?"

"To the Tombs," says he. "We're all going there," and he covered his miserable lookin' face in his hands.

I jest sot and stared, and tried to think why they should take

livin' folks to the tombs; and a sudden it burst upon me that probably 'twas for the purpose of buryin' 'em alive and stealin' their clothes, and I sat up shriek arter shriek.

"Police! Police!" says I. "Help! Murder! Let me out!" and at it I went—pounding the door with my umbrella, and stamping on the floor with my boots until the door opened, and there we were, before a great sepelchur with sloping walls big enough to bury a million.

There was a policeman at the door, and he pulled the others out one after the other, and at last he came to me; but I held on and hollered.

"Come, now," says he, "we don't want to use you rough. Just keep quiet."

"I won't be buried alive! I won't! I won't!" says I.

"You ought to have thought of that before. Come out," says he, and if he didn't lug me out, and into a great place where the rest o' the passengers were, another policeman countin' 'em.

"Six," says he. "Why, there's one too many. Here, old woman, how did you come here?"

"They dragged me," says I. "I'll make 'em pay for it. I've got a number of cousins here, and a brother up to Peekskill. They'll punish you——"

But all the while I was trembling like a leaf with fright.

"Well," says the man, "here *is* a go. Who put you into the Black Maria?"

"If you mean the stage," says I, "seein' 'twas waitin', I got in to go up Broadway."

"Were you aware 'twas a prison wagon," says he.

"Hey?" says I. "Is this a prison?"

"It's the Tombs," says he.

All of a sudden I remembered the name.

"Them's people that have been took up?" says I.

"Yes," says he.

"And anybody seein' me get out thought *I* was took up too?" says I.

"Certainly," says he. "You have yourself to thank for it."

And I swan to man the wretch called me a confounded old fool, sure as my name is Charity Grinder.

"She ain't fit to go at large," says he, and he walked me out to the street and give me over to another policeman, and he put me into the right stage at last. So I got home to Sary's. The Cuban gentleman they have picked out for Florabella was there to dine, and I told him all about it. He said 'twas outrageous, and Sary said before I'd done getting into scrapes, I'd mortify her to death. She orter hev more sympathy with me, but this time she has reason to be mad, and the minute I've done this I'll set down and write to the papers that "Whoever saw a respectable lady get out of the 'Black Maria' stage at the Tombs prison, are hereby informed she got in by mistake, and for further perticklers call on Miss Charity Grinder, at her Cousin Sary's, No. — 25th street."

After that there can't be no misunderstanding, and Sary will feel more comfortable.

NUMBER SIX.

CHARITY DINES AT THE KITTIKINS'.

Keep me from intellectable folks all the days o' my life! I've had enough of 'em to last. Ketch me to Cousin Kittikins' agin. He ain't exackly a cousins, but, you see, his mother's aunt kept company with our Uncle Bobkins quite a spell, when she was a gal; and they'd hev been married, only he jilted her, and she sued him for breach o' promise of marriage, and took the money he was compelled to pay for breakin' her heart, to furnish with when she married Mr. Shad. So, you see, we're sort o' connected.

Cousin Kittikins was allers considered a smart boy when he lived up our way. Took to writin', and had a lot o' stuff regardin' the moon, published in the Saturday Evenin' Shower-bath, and went away to York to seek his fortune when he was goin' on nineteen.

We heerd from him now and then, and when he married he sent us a bit o' weddin' cake and a couple o' cards.

His wife was mighty intellectable too, they said, and was in the habit o' lecturin'.

Well, since that party at Sary's, things has been unpleasant

there, and I thought I'd go away a spell, so's they'd miss me; and knowin' where Cousin Kittikins resided, I up and went there, with a change o' things in a portmantle, and my knittin' work in my pocket.

I came to the door about eleven o'clock, and there it was streamin' wide open. Couple o' children eatin' candy in the hall, and a gal messin' with a broom in the area. Reckon she thought she was sweepin'. Them wild Irish has such slashin' ideas o' work.

"Miss Kittikins to hum?" says I.

Says she, "Yes, but she's engaged."

"I'm a relation," says I.

"Be you?" says she.

And I didn't answer another word, but marched in.

There was an awful bellowin' in the front parlors. Sounded as ef some one was fust gettin' choked and then squeezed. So I run in, and, laws a massy! there sat a lady in cloth pants and a short frock, and a bob-tailed coat. And she waves her hand and says she,

"Are these the rights o' woman? Speak!"

"Which," says I—"the pants?"

She clasped her hand to her forehead, and says she:

"Ha!" and then, "Excuse me, I was absorbed in my forthcoming lecture. You have business with me?"

So I told her who I was, and she shook hands and sent the gal to call Cousin Kittikins. The gal went, and come back grinnin'

"Master's oversot the big ink dimmyjohn," says she. "Soon as he's sopped it up he'll come."

"Lawful suz!" says I, "probably it's all over his shirt front and cuffs."

"Thank you for your interest, Miss Grinder," says Miss Kittikins, says she, "but *that* is impossible. Obadiah's shirt is dryin' in the kitchen at this instant."

"His *shirt!*" says I. "Land alive! hain't he got but one?"

She smiles, and she says:

"No, muslin does wear out so."

"Why don't you sot to and make him a few?" says I.

Says she, "With my engagements? Why, Miss Grinder, I lecture before the Hindoo Approximation Consolidated Female Society at one o'clock, and say a few words at a meeting of the Freedwoman's Humbug Association at three; am chairwoman of the Ladies' Association for Teaching the Jewsharp to the Hindoos, at six; and come out in my grand speech, in which I prove that a girl of sixteen is invariably the intellectual superior of a man of sixty, at a quarter to eight. Shirts! What time have I for shirts? Besides, Obadiah can always have one of my short gowns on a pinch."

"Lawful suz!" says I.

Just then in come Obadiah.

"Excuse me," says he, "for keepin' you so long, but after I'd concluded to let the ink soak in, the devil called and detained me——"

"The—*who?*"—says I.

"The printer's boy, vulgarly called the 'devil,'" says he.

"Happy to hear it," says I. "Thought you meant the old boy. Well, how do you get along? Writin' yet?"

"Just published a new book," says he; "a triumphant literary success—'The Hobgoblin of Holyoak; or, The Murder of Miranda, the Victim of Kasparagoobleboo."

"Du tell," says I. "Who killed her?"

"Her demon lover," says he. "In the first chapter there are two murders, nine specters, one natural death, and a suicides, beside which Kasparagoobleboo hatches his muderous plot."

"Lor!" says I.

"In the second chapter, Miranda escapes her demon lover by springing from the castle-keep into the moat at the dead hour o' midnight," says he. "The scene is laid in New Jersey, and the hull o' the characters are dead before the second part. It's a thrilling thing, Miss Grinder. I'll give you a copy."

"Thank ye," says I. "Law, how hungry I do feel after my walk!"

"That reminds me," said Miss Kittikins, "dinner ought to be ready. Biddy, why haven't you rung the bell?"

"I sent master Dick up to tell," says Biddy, who was doin' suthin in the hall.

"Law!" says Miss Kittikins, "what a boy that is! Come down stairs, or we shan't get anything!"

So down we went. Lord o' Goshen! There sot the table all askew, and there was them infant Kittikins—all as dirty as rag-pickers.

One on 'em was a-top the table, diggin' pieces out of a leg o' mutton, and t'other was eatin' apple-sars with two tablespoons, one in his mouth and one in the dish the hull time, so's to get the more. Another young man was peggin' potatoes at his little sister, and the baby had put the pepper-caster into the sugar-bowl, and was just emptying in the mustard. Land o' Goshen! I sot down and started.

"Naughty little souls!" says Miss Kittikins. "But we were like them once. Sit down and help yourself, Miss Grinder."

"Well, mum," says I, "as to helpin' or bein' helped, I dunno. I hain't eat my peck o' dirt yet, and I shan't begin now."

"Oh," says she, not a bit put out. "Well, people that have never had children are always particular. Biddy, is there anything they haven't handled?"

"Some bologny," says Biddy.

"Well, fetch me that," says I, "and a bit cut out o' the middle of a loaf, for I'm about starved. "What's the matter, Miss Kittikins?"

Says she, "The teapot spout is stopped up with something. It won't pour out."

Biddy took a spoon and dived into the pot, and says she:

"Whoo! St. Peter over us! this is a fine place for the baby's illigent new blue stocking that we lost from the wash! Masther John put it in, or my name's not Biddy!"

"No tea for *me*, Miss Kittikins!" says I. "Seems to me the old boy's in the house!"

"Little *contretemps* will occur," says she.

"I'd baste contrary Toms with horsewhips then," says I, for I was mad to be cheated out of my tea.

"Biddy," says she, "make a little new tea for Miss Grinder."

Away went Biddy, and in she comes, sooner than I expected, with a teapot.

"Thare's a clane cup for ye," says she, but when I tasted it—excuse me for writin' such vulgar words, but it tasted o' bed-bugs.

Says I, "This ain't tea.

Says Miss Kittikins, "Where did you get it, Biddy?"

Says Biddy, "There was a paper of it on the top shelf. The other was out."

"A blue paper?" says Miss Kittikins.

"Yes, mum," says Biddy.

"Law!" says she. "That's the old stuffin out o my mattress. I wrapped it up to show the upholsterer what I wanted my new one filled with. Who put it on the shelf, I don't know, but I knowed it by its singular smell when it was found out."

I never felt so sick before since the hour I was born.

Well, that finished my meal, and I up and left the tabie.

Before I'd got out o' the room Cousin Kittikins follered, and we was all together up stairs agin. I du believe even Miss Kittikins felt kinder squalmish.

She says, as she comes into the parlor:

"Why don't you ever wear the Bloomer costume, Miss Grinder?" says she.

Says I, "'Cause I don't fancy cloth pants and docked petticuts would be becomin'."

"Oh," says she, "'Tisn't for that one should wear them."

"'Tain't," says I. "What for, then, mum?"

"Oh," says she, "to set an example to the rest of our sex."

"'Twould take more than that to make me figger round the cloth pants," says I.

She kinder groaned, and then, says she:

"One o'clock. I must be off. Biddy, where is my bonnet?"

"I hain't seen it," says Biddy

"You *must* says she. "I hung it on a peg in the kitchen when I came in yesterday."

Then one o' the young uns bawled:

"Ma, Sam had it on."

"Where is it, Sam?" says she.

"Up chimbly," says he.

"Go get it," says she; and out he went and pitched in suthin' all soot and ashes.

"Shocking," says she. "Biddy, brush it off, and bring my shawl."

"The shawl is on Miss Kitty's bed for a blanket," says Biddy. "I can't make beds twice a day."

"Impertinent menial," says Miss Kittikins. "Obey me or tremble!"

And Biddy went arter the shawl.

Naturally 'twas mussed, and besides there was a scorch in the

middle that showed it had been used for an ironing blanket—just the stamp of a flat iron.

Miss Kittikins put it on, and the bonnet too, and says she:

"Miss Grinder, I'm obliged to leave you, but I hope I shall find you here when I come back. Help yourself to anything you like, and amuse yourself as you please. *Au revoir.*"

Away she marched, and away I'd er marched tu, only a thought struck me. What that thought was I can't tell you until next chapter, on account of bein' dreadful overcome with sleep; but you shall hear of it, then, or my name isn't Charity Grinder.

NUMBER SEVEN.

HOW CHARITY CLEARED UP A HOUSE.

The idea that struck me, that I told you I'd mention in this chapter, was that I'd as well as not stay where I was and clear up a little. I always was a master-hand to clean, and I kinder itched for to get a hold of a broom and scrub-brush. Here wus a chance, and I made up my mind how't the minute they'd gone —for he wus a goin' arter her with a load o' papers and a numberill—I'd drive that lazy Bridget round and set things straight for Cousin Kittikins.

Poor fellow, I did pity him. Men ain't to be blamed for sich things as happened since I arrived tu the house. It was all her fault for bein' so intellectable.

So I remained, and the minute I heared the door bang, down stairs I went. I found Biddy with her feet on the kitchen hearth, eatin' peanuts, and every livin' thing stuck up with dirt.

"Here," says I, "d'ye know what time it is?"

Says she, "M'um, our clock is stopped."

"Should think it must be," says I, "and you along with it. Come now, no foolin', fetch your broom and dust-pan, and an

extra one fur me, and mizzle up stairs. Miss Kittikins has left me to keep house, and I'm a goin' tu keep it. It's been spookin' along of itself so far, I should say. Where's the young uns?"

"Out in the street, I reckon," she says.

"Well," sez I, "fetch 'em, no foolin'. I will hev my orders attended to."

And in a minute in came the hull bilin' driv like a passel o' pigs, and black with dirt.

"There," sez I, "stop proceedins. Lift off the biler and give me soap and sody, and a crash towel; I'm goin' tu wash these ere up fust."

And so I did. Soused every one, rubbed 'em till they shone wrapped 'em up in counterpanes, and sot 'em in a row on the wash-bench, with each a spellin'-book, and orders to study.

"And don't you budge," sez I. "When the house is clean you shall have some clean clothes, and study catechise for a change."

They all yelled, but I didn't care for that, and up stairs I went.

"Top o' the house fust," sez I. "Which is the nastiest room?"

"Missuses," sez she, and in we went.

Massy! what a hole. On the mantel-piece was four bottles of ink, and one upset; a dozen dirty pens, a bowl of victuals of some kind, a fork, her t'other bonnit, a lamp all ile outside, a book open on its face, and a dirty towel.

On the floor wus his boots and her slippers, the young uns dirty aprons and a pair o' tongs, a dead kitten, and a lot o' ashes out o' the grate, couple o' palm leaf fans, and a flat-iron.

Under the bed wus the heft o' the family's siled clothes in a market-basket, and a plate o' apples. On the bed wus a cloak and an old gown to keep them warm, an' one o' the quilts wus strung up in the windy to play curtain.

Last night's gas wus burnin' yet, and the wash hand-basin and drain in the corner wus overflowin' an' dribblin' onto the floor.

Besides that somebody had evidently been bathin' in the fish biler, a real elegant one, with a copper bottom. The things at Cousin Kittikins seemed all good if they'd known how to use 'em.

"What's this here room?" sez I, p'intin' to the next.

"It's the study," sez she. "Missus don't hev that swept ever."

"She will this time," sez I, so in I goes, and choked straight off with the clouds of dust that was riz by walkin' in it.

There was more books with kivers off, and more dirty writin' paper, than ever I see afore.

"Begin with the wust," sez I. "The hull books we'll keep, and the ragged we'll burn. Clear off the shelf. Here's a mess o' scribblin'; light that fust in the grate. Don't throw in no clean paper. I ain't goin' to countenance waste."

And we went on pitchin' in scribbled paper for ten minutes. Then I begun with the old books.

"'Bible,'" sez I. "Put that safe on the shelf, if it *is* all

over 'lasses. 'Hymn-Book.' Stick that up too. 'Bacon.' Reckon that's a cook-book. Take keer o' that. 'Shakespeare.' A nasty, wicked play-book. Pitch it on the fire. 'Pope.' Mebbe you're a Catholic, Biddy, but *I* ain't; so burn anything relatin' to the Pope. 'Volney's Ruins.' That's history, or geography; keep it for the children. These here is verses. Burn 'em. Lot o' novels. Burn them. We're beginnin' to hev more room. Newspapers. Them that's clean keep for dresser shelves. What's this? 'Byron's Poems.' They'd pison the air; and the kiver is gone, too. Pitch that in. Nice clean book—'Pilgrim's Progress'—put that on the shelf. 'New Testament.' Dear me! there's a fine-tooth comb betwixt the leaves!"

And so I went on, and when all the books but about a dozen was burnt, and the dirty scribbled paper, too, I had the floor scrubbed and the windy's washed, and sot the clean paper on the desk, with the nicest inkstand aside of it, and darkened it up, and went on to her bedroom.

Biddy grumbled the heft o' the time, but she was afeard to go off, because her wages was due, and she thought she mighn't get 'em in that case.

'Twas half-past six when we'd got through, and then pork and beans was ready and the table sot, and all the children dressed clean, at their cipherin', for there warn't no catechises in the house.

"They'll feel thankful for once," sez I.

"Just see if they will," sez the girl, with a grin, and at that minute in walks Miss Kittikins.

She stared at the children, all sittin' in a row as nice as wax, and says she:

"Great Heavens!"

"They air clean," says I.

She sinks into a chair, and says she, "Obadiah!" and in comes Kittikins.

Says she, "Behold our wretched babes injuring their health, and ruining their constitutions and eyesights over *books!*"

He looks at me, and says he:

"Air you aware, Miss Grinder, that we have come to the resolution that study is injurious to infant minds? Develop the body," sez he, "and the brain will develop itself. Throw aside your volumes, children, and fly to the gymnasium!"

"They can't do that, sir," sez Biddy. "If ye plaze, it's all burnt up."

"The poles—the ropes—the dumb-bells—the Indian clubs!" says Kittikins.

Sez I, "If you mean them nasty clothes lines, and dirty sticks and bats in the garret, they air burnt. Hadn't a idee they was Jim what's-his-names. I've cleared yer house for ye from top to bottom."

Then them two Kittikins looked at each other and flowed out of the room, and back he came first, yaller with rage, and says he:

"My manuscript, my manuscript, my manuscript! Restore my manuscript?"

"Hain't seen it. What was it?" says I.

"Bugram, the Regum; or, the Ghastly Guest," says he. "Hob, the Happy Hunter of the Heath—Hunki Dori; or, the Doctor's Vengeance, and McHeath, of McHeath; or, the Bloody Doom. Where air they?"

Says I, "Was they books?"

Says he, "Unprinted books—paper written on, and sticked together."

"Law," sez I, "I'm afeared they're gone. You'd orter a left word about 'em."

Just then in flies Miss Kittikins.

"Husband," says she, "Yon fiend incarnate has destroyed my speech on the Supremacy of Woman, and my lecture on the Haunts of a Barn-Yard Hen. And the library is gone. Only twelve books left."

Says he, "Wretched Female!"

Says I, "What are you, I'd like to know?"

Says he, "Listen. Have you burnt Dunderhead's proof that an intellectual man never believes in anything?"

Says Miss Kittikins, "She *has*."

Says he, "I cannot forgive that. No, I cannot forgive that. We will say adieu forever, Miss Grinder."

"Not before I've had my dinner," says I.

And I went to work at the pork and beans with a will.

"I've heerd tell of folks so dirty they didn't know themselves when they was clean, and you belong to 'em. You'd orter go onto yer bended knees and thank me 'stead o' talkin' so."

Says Kittikins, "You've destroyed the fruits of a year's study and labor."

"D'ye mean the apples that was under the bed?" sez I, "They've been washed and are in the pantry."

Says he, "I speak of the products of my pen."

"Lor'," sez I, "you've got lots o' clean paper and room to write in. What I burnt was too dirty to be used. I've done my duty by you," sez I, "and I hope this ingratitude will be forgiven," sez I; "anyhow, I pity and despise you too much to get mad."

So, havin' done dinner, I on with my things and drops 'em a courtesy and walks out, and I don't walk in to the Kittikins again in a hurry.

NUMBER EIGHT.

WHY CHARITY REMAINED MISS GRINDER.

Didn't never hear nuthin' o' my precious history, did ye? Law, no, I reckon not—though I hev been in print, too. Mrs. Cluppins, that come down tu our place to write a cook-book, got my recipe for a plum puddin', and named it arter me—Charity plum puddin'; and once I contribbited a five-dollar bill to the association for providin' the Humbug Islanders with pincushions, and was alluded to as Miss C. G., of P——, $5.

However, about my love affairs. I've acted nobly, and never told no reporters nothin' whats'ever about 'em, on account o' the feelin's o' them that might read 'em. I hev been called the Glory of Peekskill in my young days, though t'aint for me to mention it; and I ain't so orful old now, for the matter o' that.

I could give a list o' risin' young men that offered themselves to me in my airly youth, and two widdiwers, with immense fortunes; but I turned up my nose at all on 'em—even one that followed me fifteen years, and committed suicide by plungin' into dissipation, after he'd come to the detarmination that nothin' could induce me to alter my detarmination. Poor dear! he only died four years ago. His'n was such a slow method. His

affection was entirely disinterested, and his heart entirely mine. He warn't but six years junior to me, and his fust offer was made about a week arter Grand'ther Billins' death. Poor old man! he left his property 'twixt brother Jonathan and me, when he stated that some folks had mixed motives for devotin' themselves to their enameraters, but that his'n was pure as mornin' dew. Beautiful, warn't it? I've got his letters to hum, in a bushel basket, kivered with an old linen pillarcase. Allers was keerful of my things, from a child.

Said, in one on 'em, nuthin' would please him better than for tu hev the privilidge o' strewin' my path with flowers. Warn't it beautiful? Used the most illegant langwidge, and no bad grammar. I don't abomilate nuthin' as I do the use o' bad grammar. Graddyated myself at Miss Squizzle's Seminary; worked a piece in cross stick, and got a prize for a composition, writ in verse. To tell the truth, Sally Spiggot writ it for me—but then I did her sums.

This is how it begun:

> "Achilles' wrath, to Greece the direful spring
> Of woes unnumbered, heavenly goddess, sing!
> That wrath which hurled to Pluto's gloomy reign
> The souls of mighty chiefs, untimely slain."

There was more on't, and the examiners praised it to the skies, and says one on 'em, "Considerin' her age, it's mighty smart."

'Nuther on 'em scratches his head, and says he, "Seems to me 'tain't purely original. Is it all your'n, little miss?" and I

says, "Yes," as bold as brass, for I warn't goin' to tell how't Sally Spiggot writ it for me.

Lor', yes—I always *was* well thought of, an' kep' the fust society wherever I went—none o' your low, uneddicated folks—I despise 'em.

That was an examination. You don't see none such nowhere now. We all parsed grammar, and ciphered sums, and did hist'ry, and some on 'em recited pieces they'd selected.

The parents was to teach 'em, and poor little Jemmimy Sprouts, she hadn't no mar, and she went and stood up when called on, and begun to repeat this here :

"To the dark and silent tomb
Soon I hastened from the——"

There she was choked by Miss Squizzle, and carried into a classroom and feruled on both hands. Though how was a motherless child to know how't an epitaph on a new-born infant warn't the thing to speak.

But this here ain't my topic. I wanted to tell ye how I didn't happen for to marry.

You see I never took no notion to none o' my numerous admirers, only Mozart Jenks ; and though I knowed he was infatooated with my charms, seemed as if he wouldn't never come to the pint ; knowed he adored me, but he was too bashful to say so. We went round a heap together, and he sot up with me a number o' times in the parlor till twelve o'clock ; but then, even, he didn't never speak six words. Most you'd get out of

him was, "Reckon we'll hev a spell o' weather," or the like o that.

Well, this hed been a-goin' on a year, when I made up my mind to bring him to the pint, for fear he'd spile some other match for me, and never speak himself arter all. Concluded to do it in the evenin' we was invited to spend to Miss Knockternal's.

'Twarn't a reg'lar party. Sort o' a sociable affair, ye know—the gals and married women folks went tu tea, and the gentlemen they came arter. I went purvided with a couple o' mottoes—two red sugar hearts tied together with blue ribbon, and these here verses :

"If you love me as I love you,
No knife can cut our hearts in two."

Well, them was in my pocket, done up in silver paper, and I'd made up my mind jest what tu du before I went over.

Miss Knockternal was mighty glad to see me—all my friends allers hev adored me—and we sot down to hev a chat, along with some o' the other ladies, and I happened to be knittin'.

"Law," says she, "Charity Grinder, I du swan tu man ef you hain't a master hand tu knit! Law!" says she, "I wish I could do as well. I kin knit stockin's, but not mittens, and here's a lot o' white and scarlet wool would make Amelia Sophronia a nice pair."

Says I, "Hand it over, Miss Knocternal; I'll knit 'em in no time—they ain't a circumstance."

"Thank ye," says she, "I'll jest wrap up one of her old un for you to know the size."

So up she wrapped it, and I stuck it in my pocket, and nat'rally didn't think of it agin.

Well, we had tea. Miss Knockternal had four kinds o' cake and three kinds o' sweetmeats—sugar was high that year, but law, Miss Knockternal wus allers one to hev 'em. Arter tea we went up stairs. Then the gentlemen came, and apples, and nuts, and cider, and more cake, were handed round; and Mr. Mozart Jenks *he* came, sot alongside o' me, and devoted himself to me the heft of the evenin'.

When it came time to go, sez he:

"Miss Grinder, may I have the pleasure o' escortin you hum?"

Sez I, "Yes, Mr. Jenks."

So we started together. For half a mile he moved along, suckin' his cane head, and not sayin' nuthin'. Kinder made me mad to see him so spoony, and sez I, I'll fetch him—I'll hev the proposition out of him tu-night, or I ain't Chat Grinder. So I heft a great sigh.

"What ails ye?" says he.

"Nuthin'," sez I, and I puts my handkercher to my eyes.

"Oh," sez he, "du tell me."

Sez I, "I'm thinkin' what a desert this here world is without a companion what congeliates with a body's soul."

Sez he, "Sing'lar. I wus thinkin' nigh about the same."

"How curus," says I.

"Ain't it?" says he.

Sez I, "Didn't know you of the male sect ever sighthed for congeniality in the opposite one."

"Why," sez he, "we all do that's worth anything. Lovely woman is needful tu our happiness."

Then I thought 'twas comin'. But law, he only sucked his cane head agin.

Sez I, arter a pause, "Wonder you never thought of marryin', with them sentiments."

Says he, "I hev."

"Why hain't you?" says I.

Says he, "I warn't sure she'd hev me, and I thought I'd feel flat if she didn't."

"Mebbe her sentiments is reciprocal," sez I.

"Mebbe they be," sez he, "but I can't find out."

"Faint heart never won fair lady," says I.

He jest sucked his cane. I could ha' punched him.

We walked on a spell, and cum in sight o' our house. 'Twas a summer night, and our folks was sittin' onto the porch. I knowed there'd be no chance soon. Says I:

"I don't believe, Mr. Jenks, you care to know her sentiments."

"I'd give a big punkin to know 'em," says he.

I put my hand in my pocket in a hurry.

Sez I, "Take this hum, Mozart Jenks, and p'raps 'twill reveal her sentiments."

So I stuck (as I supposed) the two hearts into his hand, and run in and left him.

'Twas done, and I reckoned he'd be down next mornin', but he warn't. Nuther wus he there next day, nor Sunday. I'd been plain enough, Lud knows, even for Mozart Jenks, and I was perplexed.

When Monday came I was in dretful tribbilation, and was settin' by the windy when ma cum in, and says she:

"Chat, Miss Knockternal has been a speakin' o' some mitts you're knittin' fur her. I hain't seen 'em."

"They hain't commenced," sez I.

Well, goodness knows, I'd as lief knit as not, and I stuck my hand in my pocket, and out I fetches the odd mit fur a pattern. It felt kinder hard, and I undone it in a hurry.

Land alive! 'Twarn't the mit, 'twas the two hearts united by blue ribbon and the motto. I'd gin him the mitten by mistake, and if ever a girl felt distracted I did.

Few days arter I got a note. It run this way:

"MISS GRINDER: You needn't have took the trouble to give me the mitten before I asked you The lady I alluded to was Miss Grampkins, and her sentiments *is* reciprocal. I don't send the mitten back because 'taint likely you'll ever have occasion for it, and subscribe myself,

"Yours, respectfully, MOZART JENKS.

"P. S.—I'm to be married Thursday. M. J."

Of course I knowed 'twas all out of spite. He hadn't had no thought before of Miss Grampkins. But the milk was spilt, and that's the last of it.

So as I hain't seen Mozart's equal since, I remain in singular blessedness to this day, and don't suppose Mozart knows how't I only gave him the mitten by mistake.

NUMBER NINE.

CHARITY GRINDER ATTENDS A MATINEE.

If there is an angel in man's guise on earth, I do think it is dear Horace Billiwinkle. Out of a hair-dresser's window, or one of those dentists' show-cases, where they keep putting their talse teeth in with cambric handkerchiefs (the wax images, I mean, you know), there never was such a complexion, or such dear pink nostrils, or such a sweet little mouth. And, then, his mustache! No matter what that envious Miss Sourgrapes tells you, don't believe that it is dyed, for the raven hue is nature's own.

When I see him coming up the street, his beautiful gray inexpressibles, so exactly like legs of mutton in shape, and his sleeves to match, and his heavenly boots, so tight and shining, and his dear little bob-tailed coat, and his Dundreary neck-tie, and his diamond studs, and the daintiest mauve gloves, or sometimes lemon color, six and a quarter ladies' size, and the little cane, with an ivory dog's head, that he twirls, are so bewitching that I feel it impossible to portray my sensations vividly with my pen. And then, when I think that I may call that magnifi-

cent creature *mine* some day, fancy what the pride of my heart must be.

And now, though I intended to write anonymously, I find I must give you my real name. I am Florabella Alice Elizabethina Perkins.

I wouldn't for the world have you fancy I might be Miss Sourgrapes, to whom Horace Billiwinkle never paid the least attention that could have been regarded as serious by any sensible peason.

I am the idol of his heart. I know it, for he has told me so fifty times. And though Perkins *is* a common name compared with Billiwinkle, and my grandfather was a shoemaker, and it was only his great-grandfather's father who kept a junk shop, and sold rags, and bottles, and things, we are on a par now, and who cares for ancestors so long as they're not publicly mentioned?

There has been, I admit, a coldness between the families since that wretch of a cousin of ma's, Miss Charity Grinder, introduced a number of awful people into our parlors at a party we gave, and would talk about poor, shoemaking, respectable grandpa. She should have felt sympathy instead. Mrs. Billiwinkle should; for though the junk shop man died too long ago to be dragged into conversation, I don't believe *he* was respectable, and went to church, and all that. In fact, Mrs. Crampton Codfish says human bones were found in his shop after his decease.

Poor old Mrs. Crampton Codfish, *she* needn't talk, for though it's ages ago—as much longer before the junk man as the junk

man was before the shoemaker—there was a Codfish who came to be hung. So, as ma says, when the carriage rolls past, with only little shriveled Mrs. C. inside, and four servants outside in livery, her line begins in a noose. For all that, though, nobody can help envying her the carriage and all those calves in silk stockings dangling about it. It *is* so stylish.

There I go, wandering away from the point. I set out to tell you about what happened to us—Horace and I—last Saturday; for Horace, as I meant to say when I left off, is not altered by circumstances over which I had no control.

We meet—and oh! a piece of romance is so delightful—against Mrs. Billiwinkle's will; sometimes at that sweet Matilda Dorkine's, who is my dearest confidante and friend, sometimes in Broadway itself, at least three times a week.

Last Saturday we had an appointment to go to a matinee together. A musical matinee of the most elegant and select description, or Horace Billiwinkle never would have invited me. He of all persons dislikes to mingle with the vulgar rabble.

First we were to lunch at Maillard's, and there we met. (It wasn't wrong, for ma knew all about it, though of course she pretends to be deceived.)

We were sipping our chocolate. I had on my pea-green silk, looped up over a skirt of black and silver; my velvet basque and the last new bonnet, just the shape of a Roman helmet, and as much false hair as I could fasten on, though my own is very abundant, and measures a yard. In fact I was stylish enough to match dear Horace, and I knew it.

Well, we were sipping our chocolate, and conversing, as we do converse at times when no one listens to us but the angels, when, oh, gracious goodness! I heard somebody scream:

"There you are, Florabella! I du declare, New York is the greatest place for meeting folks! How's your ma? Hoppin' mad with me yet, I reckon. Ain't I glad to sit down—this here bundle is as heavy as a ton of coal."

And down in the seat before us plumped Charity Grinder.

It's a mercy one of the cups didn't fly at her head. I felt my fingers closing round the handle so closely.

"Is it the lady from the country?" asked Horace, in his charming, unaffected way. "Weally, what does she want?"

"I can't think," I whispered. Then I said, with a smile, for in society we must smile though our hearts are bleeding:

"Come in for refreshments, I suppose, Miss Grinder?"

"Yes," said Charity. "Them waiters won't hook my bundle if I sot it on the floor, will they?"

"Oh, no," said I, looking at my watch. "Mr. Billiwinkle, I'm afraid we're late. Sorry to leave you, Miss Grinder, but we are going to a matinee."

Horace took the hint.

"Vewy sorry," he said, and then he beckoned a waiter, and gave him a bank bill.

"You see that elderly lady with a parcel?" he whispered. "Stuff her with *charlotte russe* and things, and keep the change."

"That will keep her safe," he said to me. And we smiled, and bowed, and left, I thinking, as Horace so wittily remarked, that Charity was "safe" for an hour or so.

Alas, we'd only walked a block when a crossin' sweeper ran up to us, and said:

"Stop a minute, missus; there's some one coming after you."

I knew in a flash who it was. Before I could think of a plan of escape, Charity was up with us. I thought I should die. She had her bundle in one hand and her blue cotton umbrella in the other, and came up talking.

"Lawful suz!" she shouted. (Why is it nature gives such people such loud voices?) "Thought I'd never catch ye. Here, Mr. Billiwinkle, take my numberill, and I'll catch hold of your arm, so's not to get separated."

And she did run her paw, in a great glove, with fur at the wrist, up to the elbow, through Horace's arm, and put the umbrella into his hand. I don't know whether he was bewildered or afraid of her, she was so big and strong, but he took the umbrella—*such* a baggy one, with no ferule, and a great hook at the end of the long pole—and let her hold fast to him. I've described his dress—fancy him with Charity, in a yellow shawl, and her awful bonnet a quarter of a yard above her head on the face, and with nine blue cabbage roses and an imitation lemon on the brim, and a bundle tied up in a red handkerchief on her arm—with his cane in one hand and the umbrella in the other, and his mouth wide open, and his eyes shut tight, with an eyeglass in one of them—so horrified by what had happened to him that his senses had, I'm sure, left him for a while entirely. It was my impulse to rush from the spot and hide myself in an

omnibus. But could I desert my Horace under such horrible circumstances? Lord forbid! I walked by his side, feeling that if, after such a sacrifice, he could ever cease to adore me, he was less than man. And all the while Charity was talking.

"When I heerd you say you was goin' to a mattyneigh, I thought I'd go tu," she said. "I never seen one, and I want tu see all the sights. Lor'! here we are, ain't we?" For just then a wretch of a Jew boy thrust himself before us, crying, "Opera-glasses for the *matinee*, sir!"

"Hurry in," said Charity, "and get good places."

And she dragged Horace on; and he, like one out of his senses, took three tickets, and went straight on.

"Horace," I whispered, "make her let go, can't you?"

And he answered like one in a dream:

"Pewhaps we can lose her in the cwowd."

He got her into a seat, and in the bustle of entrance people didn't notice much, or thought she didn't come with us. Then away we went, as fast as we could, to the other part of the house; though Horace, in his confusion, held tight to the umbrella, until I absolutely took it out of his hand and put it under a seat.

The orchestra began to play, and the audience to whisper, and fans to flutter, and I allowed Horace to touch my toe with his, and it was as like Paradise as earth could be.

But, alas! earthly bliss is ever fleeting.

Signora Screechorina had just begun that lovely thing from the Bandit's Bride, which the libretto translates:

"Horrible villain as thou art,
Still my soul adores, respects thee!"

(though there is something so funny about those translations, you can't be sure of them unless you know Italian); when we heard some one say:

"Shove along, mister man, and let me get to where my folks is—them young folks there. He's courtin' her, and she's my first cousin's darter," and along came Charity, with every glass in the house turned toward her.

"Thought I'd come alongside of you," she said. "I'm kinder puzzled. Which is the mattyneigh? Him or her? or the *pi*anner; or what? or ain't it come on yet? Good gracious! where's my numberill? You hain't lost it."

"Do hush!" I whispered.

"Hush!" says Charity. "No I won't—that numberill cost two dollars when it was new," and up she rose.

"Sorry to interrupt the mattyneigh," she shouted. "But my numberill has been gone off with. Blue cotton, with a hook for the handle. Anybody that took it had best bring it back to Mr. Billiwinklum, sottin' beside me, or I'll have 'em arrested. Go on, mum," she said to the signora, nodding at her. "And after all, if I have interrupted you, I don't keep on jawin' all the time like the rest of em; so you needn't stare at me."

And down she sat again.

I felt something fall against me. It was the form of Horace Billiwinkle. He had fainted.

Of course they took him out—of course Cousin Charity came with us, and the climax was arrived at when she would take him home in a cab and looked out of the window to tell the driver.

"You see it's my duty to see to him. He's engaged to my Cousin Perkins' darter—Florabella Alice."

I should wish myself dead, only I knew Charity is pious, and is sure to go to Heaven, and the first thing I know I should see a ghost (these modern spiritualist ideas upset one's theology so, they used always to be in white), a ghost in a yellow shawl, with a bundle, who would say :

"Lor', Florabella Alice—here you are. I must say it's a surprise, seein' you ain't a Baptist."

Maybe it's wicked to write such nonsense, but I'll go to Grace Church twice next Sunday, and try to make up for it.

Your wretched

FLORABELLA ALICE ELIZABETHINA PERKINS.

P. S.—Despite of what has happened, Horace Billiwinkle and I still adore each other.

F. A. E. P.

NUMBER TEN.

MISS CHARITY GRINDER MAKES A MISTAKE.

It is the fault of New York for being so similar, and I ain't tu blame. Besides, I was the most skeered of the hull bilin', so ef any one is tu complain, it's me. While I was under the impression it was housebreakers, I thought I should conglommerate. Laws a mighty! how my blood *did* friz in my veins, to be sure!

You see, this is how it happened. I went to pay a visit to Miss Pecksalter—she 'twas Abby Brownbags. She ain't no relation, but her ma was a neighbor of ourn, when she was four years old; so we may consider her an intimate friend o' the family. She married fust-rate, and has lived in New York ever since.

I had her name found out for me in the directory, and went up there one afternoon, and she received me very politely, made all the world of me, and had on two kinds o' preserves, and two kinds of cake, and potted salmon, and lots o' things. Pecksalter is in the hullsale grocery line, and is a good provider.

She lived in a brick house, with brown-stone steps and facings, and iron railings, and there was ten houses in a row, all alike

except the numbers. The fun of it was they was all furnished alike, tu. It's generally so in York—what one has t'others will hev tu—so't you'd think they was all relations.

Reason ain't, I reckon, there's so many would like to be fust folks, and ain't quite sure how that they look around and see other folks in the same predicament, and kinder try to imitate 'em, thinkin', to be sure, they know, when they don't no more than t'others.

It's so with Miss Pecksalter. 'Twarn't tu be expected she'd be up to the inquisitions o' serciety, when her ma took in washin', and was glad tu get it, tu, poor old lady. She's gone where there ain't no washin', an' things must be done up to stay so, accordin' to the gineral idee of their whiteness. 'Taint about poor old Miss Brownbags, however, I sot down to tell you, but about what happened to me.

Miss Pecksalter was mighty polite—I never seen nobody more so—and I staid with her about a week. Toward the eend o' that time I went and spent an arternoon with a friend o' mine (I'll mention more pertickeler some day) by the name of Lowery, and as there was to be company there, I expected I'd stay late.

"If you do," says Miss Pecksalter, says she, "take the latch-key, and you won't hev to wait for the door to be opened."

So I was very much pleased with the idee, and took it and went.

I stayed where I went until about eleven, and then was seen hum.

Mr. Lowery came with me, and says he:

"Shall I wait until they let you in?"

"No," says I; "I've got a latch-key," and off he went, and in I walked, easy enough, shut the door arter me, and went up stairs.

My room is the back one on the second floor (that's Miss Pecksalter's spare bedroom), and, of course, when I got in 'twas as dark as Egypt. I had thought I should find the matches on the shelf, but they warn't there, and 'twas a good while before I found 'em on the bureau. Then I lit the gas and undressed.

I had put on my nightgown under my dress to be ready in case of staying, if it rained, at the Lowery's. So I didn't waste no time rummaging. Tossed the things I took off on a cheer; turned the gas low, and got into bed. In five minutes I was sound asleep, and dreamin'. I remember I dreamed I was at the Kitterkins', and she was makin' dirt pies for dinner, when a noise woke me up.

I lifted up my eyes and saw the door open and a man come in!

I tried to scream out, but was too skeered, so I just laid still.

He shut the door arter him, and walked in, and straight up to the gas, which he turned on, full head, and then over to the bureau, which he began to rummage. I thought I should die. Next thing I expected he'd take out some kind of a weapon, and begin to murder me.

However, he didn't seem to see me; so I laid out as flat and

straight as I could, and hardly breathed, though, for the life of me, I could not help leaving a place in the quilts to peek through. He was the boldest housebreaker I ever saw, I thought; for he took off his overcoat, and took a cigar from the pocket, and began to smoke. Then I knew it was all up with me, for smokin' always chokes me. Well, I was right; in five minutes I began to cough.

I hadn't given two coughs, when he looked around.

"Sing'ler," says he, and went on smokin'. In a minute more I barked agin, and says he:

"By George, that's in my room," and he got up, and began to poke about. The minute he said "that's in my room," I began to guess what I had done. I'd gone in next door instead of tu Miss Pecksalter's, and this here was the bachelor brother that was expected, as Miss Pecksalter told me, to leave all his property to the children.

He was quite on in years, but very musical—I'd heard him singin' often.

Yes, that was him, and this was his room, and when I comprehended it, I turned cold all over. I laid as flat as I could, but in a minute he spied me out.

"There's somebody in the bed," says he.

Then I was obligated to put my head out, and the only misery there was in that awful dispensation was that I had on my best nightcap—Swiss muslin, with inserting in the border, and lace on the ends of the strings.

The minute he saw me he cried out:

"Angels and ministers of grace defend us! It's an old lady!"

"Old yourself," says I; for I was so mad I forgot everything else.

Then the hull horror of my situation burst upon me, and I wept.

Says he: "Well, this is the queerest go I ever did see. Who may you be?"

"I'm the unhappy Miss Charity Grinder," says I. "I've got here by mistake. I live next door. If you've got any perliteness in you you'll go into the pantry and shet the door while I dress."

When I said that he turned as red as flannel, and says he:

"With the greatest pleasure, ma'am," and flowed into the pantry.

I got up, turned the key on him, put a bit o' paper in the keyhole, and dressed faster than I ever did in all my life before. Then I unlocked it and cut out of the room, and down stairs tu the street door.

More haste less speed. Ef I hadn't been so fast I'd have been surer. Half way down I tumbled and came near breaking my neck.

The noise I made brought somebody to the door of the front room. The lady of the house, I calkerlated, by her voice.

She called out "Who's there?" three times; but you may bet I didn't answer. And I got the door open, and was at the next house, and had that unlocked before you could count sixty.

I made my way up stairs as fast as I could—for I wouldn't have anybody find out what had happened for worlds—and got into my own room and into my own bed, thank fortune, at last.

And as I went to sleep, I was glad nobody knew it but the old bachelor, who'd be sure to say nothin', for he must feel as bad as me. But, lawful suz! there is times when the hull creation seems agin you. I might as well hev hollered it out at once.

Not knowin' that, I went down to breakfast lookin' as ef nothin' had happened, and got talkin' to Mr. Pecksalter about York markets.

Sez I, "I hain't seen one yet."

Sez he, "Well, I'm goin' to market this mornin'. Get on your things and I'll show you what New York markets are."

So I went up to get 'em. There was my bonnet, but there was somethin' that didn't seem like my new cloak that I'd only bought the day before. It felt so funny about the arms, and was kinder tight in the skirt. I called to Miss Pecksalter.

"See here," sez I, "we hain't changed cloaks, hev we? This don't appear to fit."

"It's a man's coat," says she, in astonishment. "Why, what on earth have you been doin'? 'Tisn't Mr. Pecksalter's. His is brown. Seems to me I've seen it before, tu. How could you change your cloak for this without knowing it?"

Then she dived into a pocket, and out came a cigar-case with a name on't.

"Land alive!" says she, reading the name; "it's Mr. James

Dumpling. Why, that's the old bachelor that lives next door."

"It can't be his," says I.

"Then whose is it?" says she, and I felt turning scarlet.

What I should have said, I don't know, but at that minute there came a ring at the bell, and somebody asked to see Miss Grinder.

It was the Dumpling's hired girl, and she looked very red and discomfiscated.

"Could I see you alone, miss?" says she.

"Certainly," says I, and I took her up to my bedroom.

Then she laid down a bundle she had, and says she:

"Mister James Dumpling says, 'If you please, send him his'n.'"

And I saw it was my cloak she'd brought along with her.

I took up his coat and gin it to her. Says I:

"I s'pose you know all about it?"

Then she burst out a laughin'.

"Yes," says she. "Missus found this in Mr. James' room, and he had to tell, miss. They're roarin' about it over the breakfast this minute."

After that, of course, there was no payin' her not to mention it. And, indeed, she'd told the hull to our girl in the area an hour before. And the story got about, and I was grinned at indoors, and grinned at out, until I was fairly sick on't.

At last it got to be too bad to bear, and I packed up and went over to Brooklyn, where I have some connections.

NUMBER ELEVEN.

MISS CHARITY MEETS A POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

Ever since I've cum down from Peekskill I've intended for to write to Miss Griffin. Somehow, though, I've gone and put it off and put it off until seemed to me I wouldn't never do it. However, last Sunday was a week, I did sot down and give her an account of most o' the things that I'd been through since I got to York, with the heft of what I could find out about the folks I visited, and all I reckoned about the rest—made it as interestin' as I could, and put it in an envelope and directed it, so's to have it by me Monday mornin', when I intended to hunt up some relatives o' mine I'd heered was come to York.

Well, Monday came, and as I started out I said to Cousin Marthy, (I'm there agin a spell,)

"Where's the post-office, Marthy?"

"Goin' to put in a letter?" says she.

"Yes," says I.

"Oh!" says she. "Well, you needn't go to the post-office; only jest slip it into one o' them boxes on the lamp-posts. They'll do as well."

Says I, "Land alive, what's York comin' to? Be them post-offices?"

She laughs, and says she.

"Well, they're letter-boxes, and they save a long journey. They're quite a convenience."

"Of course they be," says I, and out I went to put the letter in first off before I did another thing.

I walked along, looking for a lamp-post, and soon I come to one. There was a box to it, and beside it stood a young man in a plaid waistcoat and very ily hair, smoking and whistling.

"Is this here the post-office, young man?" says I.

He looks at me a minute and grins—what fur, I'd like to know—and says he:

"Yes'm, and I'm postmaster-general of this corner."

"Oh!" says I. "Well, you needn't take such airs if you are. You government officials always presumes on your position in society to be imperdent to them that's full as good as you, if not a little better None o' your airs to me. I want a letter put in to the office for Peekskill. What d'ye tax?"

"Oh," said he, "that depends on weight, mum."

"Well," says, I, "what does this weigh?"

I gin him the letter, and he balanced it upon his thumb, and says he:

"Well, this is a purty heavy letter. I'll tax seventy-five cents for it. It's less than it ought to be, but considerin' you're an old lady——"

"Like your imperdence," says I. "Old!"

"Middle-age, I meant," says he.

"Oh!" says I; "say so next time. Seventy-five cents. What an awful postage!"

"It's owin' to the rise in cotton and gold," says he. "They went up double yesterday."

"Oh!" says I. "Well, I suppose it can't be helped. But I sha'n't write much more at that rate; correspondence would be too expensive. Will you take it safe?"

"Of course I shall," says he. "Come, now, my time is of value."

So I gave him the letter, and three twenty-five cent stamps, and went away, but as I looked back I saw him goin' in to a liquor store.

"I didn't like the looks o' that, and it struck me I'd stop at Marthy's agin and ask her whether he was trustworthy. So I did. I tapped at the basement window and she came.

"Marthy," says I, "what kind of a fellow is the postmaster-general at the corner?"

"Hey?" says she.

"The *postmaster-general* at the corner," says I.

Says she, "What on earth has been happening to you *now*?" So I up and told her. When I did she set to laughing until I thought she'd get hysterics. By and by, seeing how mad I was getting, she stopped and begun to explain—how't there warn't no such officiate, and how't the letter and the money was likely stolen.

"The letter ain't," says I; "I seen him put that in the box."

"Oh," says she, "then if it was stamped it will go."

"Land alive," says I, "it hadn't no stamp on it. Up home I always give the money to the people at the office, and they put them on. So I thought he would. Where d'ye get stamps?"

"Oh," says she, "I have plenty here," and she opened her pocket-book and gave me a couple.

"Now if I had my letter out, I'd put it on," says I.

She laughed, and says she:

"You'll have to write another one."

But I was determined not to. I didn't say nothin' to Marthy, but I posted up to my bedroom, and got a long bit o' whalebone, and made a hook on the end of it with a pin, and then down I marched to the corner and began to try to get out my letter.

It was plaguey work. The little flap kept a falling down, and fish as I could, I couldn't find nothing. I've got a heap of spirit, though, and I kept on. At last the pin did stick in something, and I fished a letter up, so's I could stick in my fingers and get it out. 'Twasn't mine, though; 'twas directed to a Miss Albertina Briggs.

I was provoked, I tell you, and I held it in my hand while I fished again. About ten minutes after up come another. Then I thought I'd got mine, for sure, but this time 'twas a dirty affair, directed to Bridget Rooney.

What on earth possessed me not to put 'em back, I don't know, but I held 'em while I went on peepin' into the little hole and forgettin' everything else, when down comes a hand on my shoulder, and a voice says in my ear :

"Caught you at last, eh?"

And there was a policeman.

"What are you doin'?" says he.

"Trying to get my letter out," says I.

"Needn't play the innocent on me," says he. "Come, give me your implements."

And he took away the letters and the whalebone and pin, and caught me by the arm, and marched me away up street.

There was a train of boys a mile long arter us, and I shrieked the hull way.

I've knowed ever since jest how what's-her-name, with yaller hair—Antoinette somebody, that brother's got an engraving of over the mantletry tu hum—felt when the French Revolutioners were dragging her away to the gillytine. It's spelt more French-ified in the engraving, but I can't jest remember how. I haven't a doubt—though I had no looking-glass—that—my phizma-hogany had jest the touchin' expression o' hern.

They took me to a station-house—they did, indeed; and then the policeman says to the gentleman behind a desk :

"Here's the person who has been robbing the letter-boxes in this ward. I've jest captured her and her implements.

"Oh, what a dreadful thing!" says I. "I ain't, Mr. Judge and Jury, I *ain't*. I'm highly respectable and a professor, and

I'll have him sued for libel the minute I can write to my brother to come down and do it."

"Silence." says the gentleman. "This is a very ingenious contrivance," and he looked at the whalebone and pin like an owl. "Were there any letters on her person?"

"Two," says the policeman, handin' 'em up.

"I was goin' to put 'em back," says I.

"Silence!" says the gentleman.

"Hold your own tongue!" says I. "I suppose you'd like to hang me and not have me speak a word."

"This is useless," says the gentleman. "But in consideration of your age and sex I may promise you some clemency if you give up your accomplices."

"Well," says I, "I kin knit, and work cross stitch, and make paper flowers, and do tambour work, and I did once paint a piece on velvet, but the teacher finished it up."

"Is the woman crazy?" said the gentleman.

"Them's my accomplices," says I, "and I allers hev been considered accomplished up tu Peekskill."

"No evasion," said the gentleman. "If you are in league with light-fingered Dick you might as well own it."

"I ain't engaged to nobody," says I. "Parson Scrag does call tu brother's now and then, but 'tain't for me to say he comes to see *me*."

"She's a deep one," says the policeman.

"It will not avail her," said the gentleman. "I must commit her."

"I knowed that was a legal term for sending me to prison, and down I flopped on my knees.

"Don't," says I; "I'll make full confession."

"Very well," says the gentleman; and another sat down at his desk and begun to write.

"I'm Miss Charity Grinder," says I.

"Got that down, secretary?" says the gentleman.

"Yes, sir," says he.

"I'm from Peekskill," says I, "and my brother is named Jonathan, and I belong to Dr. Cluppins'——"

"Is he one of the gang?" says he.

"Gang!" says I. "He's our pastor.

"Oh!" says he.

"I come tu York to visit my relatives and see the sights,' says I; "and if this is one of 'em, I wish I'd staid at home. I wouldn't never hev been here if it hadn't been for the post-master-general."

"Gracious goodness! what does the woman mean?" says the gentleman.

So I told him the hull on't about the letter and the seventy-five cents, and all, and says I:

"I didn't want nobody else's, but when I'd fished 'em I was afraid of catchin' 'em agin, so I didn't want to put 'em back, Mr. Judge and Jury, until I'd got mine. If that there policeman had knowed his duty, he'd hev seen I was a respectable lady, and never hev took me up for a highway housebreaker."

Then I give him Cousin Marthy's address, and told him he

knowed 'twas all true. It appeared he was well acquainted with her husband, and he begun to believe me.

He called a policeman and sent him to the house, and soon Marthy came around, in an awful rage with me. I could see that by her face. No more sympathy, the cruel wretch, than if I'd been a stranger.

What she said, however, was enough; and they didn't send me to prison; but I heard Marthy ask in a whisper:

"Isn't there any legal way of making her go home? I'm sure she'll manage to disgrace us completely if she stays much longer. She ought to be in Bedlam."

I was goin' to flare up at that, but I decided not. You see York folks is so techy that most on 'em where I've been is offended a'ready; and I mean to stay till I've made my match, and I don't mean to board while I do. Boardin' is expensive. Besides, there's real good eatin' at Marthy's. Wouldn't be, though, if she hadn't a nigger to cook, and I ain't goin' to give her a chance to quarrel with me. I walked home, hookin' arm with her, and all the sassy boys we met kept a hollerin', "There's the woman that was took up!" the hull way.

NUMBER TWELVE.

CHARITY IS ECONOMICAL.

Sence I've come to York the thing that's flabbergusted me most (I don't mind tellin' you, Mrs. Lemon, now we're takin' a quiet cup o' tea together), has been the fashions. I can't get at 'em. They look plain enough, but there's allus a mystery connected with 'em.

Now, there's the hair. Du you suppose it grows nat'ral, sort o' standin' on eend, in York, and all frizzled, or do they *du* it? Du it, hey. Well, what they want tu look like colored folks, that hain't had time to use the fine-tooth comb, for, I don't know.

Well, along when I fust come they wore bonnets without no crowns tu 'em; and then, jest as I got mine cut out, they've took to wearin' the curiousest kind of a bugle tu the back. The hull affair looks more like a tin puddin'-case, with the cover lifted, than anythin' else; and do all I would, mine wouldn't stick up so.

Well, altogether I've tried and tried to be fashionable, until my brains is wore out, and yet I heerd one o' the helps (I'm

stayin' tu Mirandy's now, and she's got lots of 'em), say I was the oldest-fashionedest critter she ever did see. That riled me, Mrs. Lemon, and when I came to consider on't I made up my mind that, come what would, I'd show 'em I could be in fashion tu.

That day I looked at Mirandy's eldest gal, and took perticke-ler notice what she stuck on. Fust, she had a tight jacket, with a short tail, and then her dress was festooned up, and under she had a striped petticoat, and a pair o' boy's boots, and a boy's hat, with a vail tu one side, and her hair was fixed roundety towndety, as slick as you please. I thought I would ask one question.

"Em'ly," says I, "what do you call that way o' doin' hair?"

"A coil," says she.

"Lor'!" says I, "what a lot o' hair you must hev!"

"Oh," says she, "it's around suthin', you know. No mortal hair could make one as big as this without."

Well, I'd got what I wanted to about the hair, and I could see the rest, and next Sunday I made up my mind to be in the fashion, and do it cheap, tu. I ain't goin' to spend all creation —leave that for Mirandy. If underskirts with stripes in 'em was stylish, I could cut off a striped one I had, and I could pin up my frock, tu.

That arternoon I went out to make the other purchases. I got the boy's hat in the Bowery, and the boots at a little cob-bler's up town aways, and the bologny at a butcher's shop, of course. What is a bologny? Why, one o' them bologny saus-

ages, smoked, you know. I could see as plain as daylight that one o' them, or somethin' for all the world like it, was what Em'ly had under her coil. I was goin' to hev a coil, tu.

I went hum and locked myself into my room. I had one o' them long vails they used to wear fifteen or twenty years ago. and that I tacked on tu one side o' the boy's hat, and then I tuk the feather out o' my bunnit, and put that in; and then I cut off my striped skirt and hemmed it for a balmoral. I couldn't get used to the boots, but if they was fashionable I was bound to wear 'em. I had a tight jacket, tu—one I used to wear indoors; and I sot tu and put fringe on that. And then I waited for Sunday. The worst time I had was gettin' the bologny soft. It was as stiff as a wire at first. Bimeby, though, I got it sos't 'would twist.

Mirandy's folks go to a splendid church in Broadway, where the folks take mighty airs, I can tell you; and that mornin' I let 'em go first. Then I sot tu work and dressed. My hair always has been heavy, and it covered the bologny up right smart. Law, what a crick in the neck it gave me, though; and how cold I felt without my cap and my ears all bare. Then I stuck on the boy's boots, and pinned up my frock, and stuck the hat on, and took one of my biggest pocket handkerchiefs by the middle along of my best numberill handle—and if I wasn't fashionable at last, 'twasn't my fault.

Folks did stare at me as I went down street; but law, I stared back, and when I cum to the church they were howlin' away inside for dear life. They don't sing altogether, like they ought

tu, but one young woman goes away ahead, with a shriek like a steam-engine, and a man (I judge by his voice, for it's all down in his stomach) comes after her two words and two notes behind, as if he was a passenger tryin' to catch up to the train and couldn't; and the rest don't seem to be very particular about anything but not pronouncing their words plain. Em'ly and Mirandy say it's splendid; for my part, I should think there'd be a judgment on 'em for not lettin' the congregation jine in.

Well, they was singin' when I went in, and I went up the aisle after a very nice young man, that's took such a notion to me he always gets me a seat. Couldn't see, for my part, what folks grinned for so. I wasn't the only one cum in late.

He took me to Mirandy's pew. She was asleep, and Em'ly was lookin' at the young men; but when I whispered "shove up, and lemme in," they both looked at me. And how they looked.

"Ah," says I, in a whisper, you see I kin be fashionable, too, if I like—the coil was the hardest; but I'm goin' to wear it reg'lar now."

They didn't say nothin', but they looked very curious. Seemed if Mirandy was going to faint.

Says I: "Ain't you well?"

Says she, in a whisper: "Go home; don't stay here no longer."

Says I: "Why?"

"Don't you see the people?" says she. And they were all grinning.

"I ain't got nothin' black on my face, have I?" says I; and just then I felt suthin' cold on my neck—for all the world like a snake.

"Ugh," says I, and puts up my hand; and law the hair had got loose, and the coil was comin' down, and there was the bologny slippin' lower and lower.

"Stick it up for me, Em'ly," says I; but she didn't budge. And next minute, bang came my bologny, and my back comb, and the hat, and feather, and vail into the middle aisle.

There wasn't no need o' askin' me to go home then. I jest ran, leavin' 'em where they was. When I got out, I put my handkercher over my head and cut home.

Mirandy and Em'ly came home in the carriage arter awhile, and begun to have high-strikers. Seein' that was the thing, I sat tu and helped 'em, and that brought 'em tu. Then it come out that I'd done wrong altogether.

'Stead o' getttin' boys' boots, I'd orter got "Polish boots," and 'stead o' havin' a boy's hat, I orter had a "Derby." And my basque wasn't the thing neither, and the bologny was worst of all.

They don't wear bolognys, but a kind o' thing made of nigger's wool on wires.

"Any way," says Mirandy, "you'd orter dress suitable tu your age, if you'd had the best things tu be bought."

"How's that?" says I.

"Like me," says she.

Says I: "I *hev* dressed that way all along."

Says she: "It's plain you don't understand the fashions, Charity."

And between you and me, I reckon I don't; not York fashions, any way, and what's more, I don't wan't to.

But, upon my word, Mrs. Lemon, the boy's hat and the Derby, and the boots I had, and them Em'ly had, didn't look any different to me. And as for the bologny, if it hadn't come out, it was the slickest.

NUMBER THIRTEEN.

CHARITY GRINDER IS POISONED.

How am I? Wal, I'm alive, and the only wonder is I ain't here to invite ye to my funeral? Been sick? Why, lawful suz! I've been nearer dead than I ever was before. I've been pisoned! I ain't over it yet. Jest put the rocking-cheer before the fire and give me a footstool, and any kind of a piece of cake and a glass of wine you've got handy, and I'll tell you all about it. You see I've been so shook that I always feel a kind o' empty gnawing tu the pit o' my stomach at twelve o'clock, unless I hev somethin' tu eat. I don't keer for no solid lunch; some cold ham or chicken, or a few biscuit, will du me until dinner. And don't make no fuss over dinner for me; ef I hev roast beef and two kinds o' vegetables, and some kind o' puddin' for dessert, I'm perfectly contented, and allers have been.

Yes, Evelina, I hev been pisoned—so's all the Lowerys, the hull bilin' of 'em; and somebody'd orter to be hung for it—who, I can't say, but I lay it tu the nigger. You see they've got one, a Freedman young woman, from down South, black as the handle o' that numberill, and jest as sarcy as she kin live and be. I've tried help o' all kinds—Irish, and Dutch, and Americans—

and I'll say this: though they're *all* pests, I wouldn't hev a Freedman young woman in the place o' the worst on 'em.

I've allers had a kind o' dread that them black critters would pison ye ef they got mad; but, land alive! when I axed Miss Lowery whether *she* warn't, says she:

"No, ma'am. The oppressed race is vilely slandered. The best indiwiduals I ever encountered had black skins."

"Du tell!" says I. "You think they're as good as white folks, then, du you?"

Says she, "Better, ef anything, Miss Grinder," and Mr. Lowery he speaks up, and says he:

"Far better. It is my opinion that they are destined some day to be the rulers of this land."

I didn't make no answer. 'Twarn't no use. I allers knowed the Lowerys was abolitionists, and I didn't want to quarrel with 'em. However I watched the Freedman young woman purty sharp, and took good care to lock my door when I went to bed nights, and I'd staid there a week afore anything happened. Then I found her in my room washin' her face with my old castile soap. I don't never use the nasty common soap these here city folks hev, and the night before I'd happened tu been talkin, to Miss Lowery.

Says I, "Why, I lay my skin bein' so good entirely to that soap. Travelin' 'round as I hev this summer, I'd hev been as black as that gal with freckles ef I hadn't used it. You see there's iron into it, and that's good for freckles."

Well, it seems the Freedman young woman heerd me, and

next day I found her scourin' herself before the glass. Minute I caught her down she went on her knees, and says she:

"Oh, please don't tell on me! please don't, old missus!"

Says I, "Land alive! 'Twouldn't be no use to tell, considerin' the Lowerys wouldn't tech ye if ye was to murder me. But what possessed ye to take that soap when there was lots o brown down stairs?"

Says she, "I heerd you say you'd been as black as me ef you hadn't used it, and I thort mebbe ef I did I'd come white."

I couldn't help larfin.

"Land o' Goshen!" says I. "It'll take more'n *soap* to get *you* white, and ef you tech this agin I'll take my shoe to you,"

and I locked the door on her; and for fear she might meddle agin, I went and wrapped my soap up in paper and stuck it in my buzzum, arter I'd washed it well, of course.

When I went down stairs I found Miss Lowery down in the kitchen, makin' cake. She was dreadful busy, and I set to and helped her. I'm a master-hand for gingerbread, and this one I made riz up light and brown and as handsome as a pictur.

"We'll hev *that* warm for tea," says Miss Lowery. "Gingercake is good warm."

And she praised it tu the skies, as well she might, for it beat hers all holler. Then I went up stairs ag'n tu wash my hands, and made sure to find the soap in my buzzum; but, land-alive, 'twarnt there! I run down agin and looked, but I couldn't find it; and I knowed for sartin the Freedman young woman had got it somehow, so I marched up to her, and sez I:

"Now, Hanner,"—that's her name—"I jist want that soap back agin."

"I ain't got no soap, missus," sez she.

Sez I, "You hev."

And jist then Mrs. Lowery came in, and I told her the hull story.

"She's got it agin," sez I.

And what d'ye s'pose Mrs. Lowery sez?

She ups with her hands and she rolls her eyes, and sez she:

"Oh, Hanner, Hanner! fur shame fur tu try tu wash away that badge o' honor, a black skin—you'd orter glory in it!"

Sez Hanner, "I'd ruther be a white lady, please 'm."

Sez she, "That's because you've been kept in ignorance, Hanner. No, Miss Grinder, Hanner is above stealin' your soap."

"Heaps above it, ole missus," sez Hanner.

Sez I, "Say old missus to a young lady agin if you durst!"

And away I marched, and didn't come down until tea time, for I felt sure she'd got the soap, and I *was* mad at Miss Lowery for not believing it.

When the bell rung, down I came, though, and fust thing I seen was my ginger-cake on a plate.

"That's Miss Grinder's make o' ginger-cake," sez Miss Lowery, "and I know it's nice."

She's real good-natured, Miss Lowery is, fur I allers give everybody their due.

Well, arter we'd eat our bread and butter and cold meat, she

begun passin' around plum sass and ginger-cake, and we all had a good-sized slice. They don't shave cake like chipped beef tu Miss Lowery's, as most Yorkers du.

The Freedman young woman was tu the table. Miss Lowery don't consider color no objection, and I noticed she didn't eat the cake very hearty. For that matter I didn't myself—seemed tu me it had a curus taste. Purty soon one o' the young us—I'd noticed he'd eat most—begun to yell.

"What's the matter, pet?" sez his ma.

"Tummick ake," sez he.

He can't but jist talk, and before he'd said it, Miss Lowery turned the color o' chalk and rushed out o' the room.

That commeced it, and in ten minutes the hull of us was an sick as if we'd been tu the middle of the oshin in a storm.

"We're pisoned!" sez I, the minute I could find breath tu speak. "There ain't a doubt on't, Miss Lowery!"

Sez she, "I know it, Miss Grinder, and I've sent for the doctor. For a wonder, poor Hanner ain't sick."

"Wonder?" says I. "No, Miss Lowery, it ain't no wonder, for *she's* pisoned me. She was forever pokin' her nose into that cake while I was makin' it, and she's done it."

"It's all your prejudice," says Miss Lowery. But she hadn't time to say much, for she turned worse just then, and by the time the doctor came the house looked like a hospital. Some was on sofys, and some on the floor, and I was in a big armcheer.

The minute I saw him I screeched out:

"We're pisoned, doctor, and the Freedman young woman did it. With my dyin' breath I insist on havin' her hung."

"It's—pre—ju—dice," gasps Miss Lowery.

The doctor didn't say nothin', but he looked at our tongues, and felt our pulses, and says he:

"There's every symptom of poisoning by prussic acid."

"I know it," says I. "How long will I live?"

Says he, "Oh, we'll have you well again; don't be agitated."

Says I, "Agitated! Why, what du ye expect? Don't I know *symptoms* is allers fatal. When a body comes tu *symptoms* it's time tu gin up."

"Tut, tut," says he, "nonsense, nonsense. I'll prepare a nannygoat."

Must hev said antidote, hey? Well, I ain't sure. I was so discomfusticated—he mought.

Says I, "Nannygoats nor nuthin' won't help; but before I die o' these symptoms, I want that Freedman young woman hung."

Says he, "She can't escape punishment; but I sha'n't let you die."

He looked awfully discomfited, though I knowed by his phyzmahogany he'd give us up. By this time t'other doctor that he sent for, it seems, arrived, and he sot up *his* opinion that the symptoms was arsenic; and then another came, and his belief was strychnine. When I heerd that, and heerd him say that you expired with it instantaneous, slap dab, the minute it got intu your stomach, I felt there wasn't no hope. Meanwhile

they went to work dosin' us, and each one dosed *his* patient for what *he* thought it was, and they looked like tiger-cats at each other; and one of 'em says, "Gross malpractrice; and another, "Abominable ignorance;" and the youngest, "Absurd old fogyism."

You're sure about nannygoats? I know what he give me was nasty enough to be anything.

Well, we was all at the pint o' death, when some o' the neighbors, that had been called in by the news, came intu the parlor. Among 'em was an old lady by the name o' Perkins, and the minute she came, she looks at us, and then at the tea-table, and says she:

"What hev ye been eatin', Miss Lowery?"

Says I, "'Twas in the ginger-cake (Miss Lowery couldn't speak). I tasted suthin' suspicious, and the Freedman young woman did it."

"Don't be tu sure," says she, "it may be accident; we ought not tu bear false witness agin our neighbors," and she goes to the table.

She cuts the cake and smells it, and tastes it, and spits it out; and says she:

"'Tis in the cake, sure enough. But ye needn't be afeerd o' dyin'. It's *soap* as plain as daylight. Look-a'-here, doctor, if 'tain't soap I'm a baby."

Well, the doctor went and smelt, and tasted, and the rest done the same, and finally they made up their minds it was soap, and come to cut it up, there was my piece of pink pin paper with a

bit o' melted soap in it yet, right in the middle. I s'pose it had fell out o' my buzzum while I was mixin' the cake.

Them that wasn't sick begun to laugh then, and them that was sick begun to get better, and we're all alive tu this day. But for all that, I think the Freedman young woman ought tu be hung; for though the soap was there, there must hev been pison tu, for the three doctors all said we had symptoms, and symptoms can't be fetched on by common soap. Miss Lowery sticks tu it how't was nuthin' but soap; so does he. But when I gets tu jawin', I always says:

"Look here, Mr. Lowery, them medical gentlemen says we had symptoms, and only differed as tu whether they was prussic acid, or strychnine, or arsenic; and as you haven't got a diplo-my as I knows on, I don't think you've any right to know more'n doctors."

He allus stops jawin' then, fur he knows I'm right. But he won't own it; men never won't.

NUMBER FOURTEEN.

CHARITY VISITS THE HOPKINS BARKERS.

Miss Scribbles to hum? Hain't, hey? Why, what a everlastin' fib! I see her peekin' over the hand-rail.

How de du, Partheny? Reckon you didn't expect to see me. Here's your gal sayin' you ain't tu hum.

Land o' liberty! what a time I've hed tu find ye. York folks is the greatest hands for never knowin' nobody. I went intu the groceryman and axed him did he know a writerman by the name o' Scribbles. Hed a wife with red hair and a awful humbly face, and was kinder scraggy. Thought to be sure they'd know ye, seein' writin' is sech a poor business and you'd be apt tu owe 'em suthin'. But they didn't. Shouldn't ha' got here as I knows of ef it hadn't a bin for this here good little boy. Give him tenpence for fetchin' me, Partheny; I told him how't you would. I thought he must be yourn at fust, on account o' his bustin' out tu the knees and elbers.

Why should *your* children be ragged? Why, ye needn't fire up so! It's a awful thing tu hev a bad temper. Ye know writin' folks like Mr. Scribbles don't never make no money.

Up tu Peekskill they've got a story round how't he don't do nuthin' but loaf, and you take in washin'.

Instead o' that, Mr. Scribbles has a little property, and you keep plenty o' help, eh? Wal, ye needn't flare up, and stick up yer nose about that, 'cause it would be a heap more credit tu ye tu du yer own work. A married wimmen's place is in the kitching.

Wal, it's a good thing Mr. Scribbles hed a little property.

'Twas a reg'lar blow tu me when I heerd who you was married tu. I allers sot a heap on you.

Sez I, "Who's Partheny married, Miss Mankles?"

Your ma perks up, and sez she:

"A genus, Charity."

"A *who?*" sez I.

"A genus. One o' these here book writers," sez she.

"Land o' Goshen!" sez I, "I'd a heap ruther hearn 'twas a chimbly sweep, 'cause he'd a earnt his breaktwist afore he swollered it."

Yes, du take my bunnit and shawl, and don't put 'em down in the dirt and dust. I'm mighty keerful o' my things; and if you kin get me a little o' the best brandy, and some hot water and sugar, p'raps I sha'n't faint.

What ails me? Why, I've had the awfulest turn you ever knowed. It's a marsy I ain't a crowner's inquest at this identical minute. I'm goin' tu write tu Jonathan tu see ef I can't hev the law of the Hopkins Barkers. Never was so ill-used before.

You see, she's one o' Betsy Jane Griffin's darters, and she was married a spell ago tu Hopkins Barker.

Allers promised I'd go and see 'em, but didn't till last week. Then I packed up and started, and got there about dusk.

She was overjoyed tu see me, but arter tea him and her had tu go out on account o' a neighbor's child dyin', and they bein' expected tu come.

Well, of course I was all alone in the house, for the gal was gone out, tu, and I hadn't nothin' much tu amuse myself with, so I thought I'd see what she had.

I ain't one o' them people that's allers pryin' intu other folks' affairs. Them I abominate; but I like naturally to know what folks hev.

Fust off I looked intu her wardrobe closet and bureau drawers.

She hain't had but one silk frock since she was married, that's sartin. But her underclothes is the heft of 'em worked. She's got a green merino, tu, that's purty good, and a yaller brown delain jest made up.

He was amazin' well off fer collars and cravats, and they've got no end o' gloves.

I had every livin' thing out and looked at it, and still 'twern't seven o'clock.

I didn't know what tu du with myself, and so when I had got through up there I went down tu see ef Hopkins Barker was a good provider.

How was I goin' tu find that out? Why, by lookin' at the pantries.

Wall, I'll say fur him, fur a young man he does purty well. The jellies, and presarves, and pickles was interestiner than usual. I'd got the jars counted, and was up on a barrel tu the further eend, a lookin' at some hams, when I hears a key in the front basement door, and I knowed some one was a comin'. In a minute I see how 'twas the help. Now gals o' that kind is so narrer-minded she might a thought I was meddlin' with Miss Hopkins Barker's things, so sez I tu myself, "I ain't goin' tu let her see me," and I blowed my light out and stood flat agin the wall on the barrel. 'Twas easy tu du that, 'cause I hadn't got no hoops on, and was in my dimity wrapper and slippers, tu be comfortable.

I expected the help would streak up stairs tu bed straight off, but, land o' liberty! she didn't. She walks in, hollerin' to some one behind.

"Come in, Pat; the missus and masther is both out for the avenin', I know."

And in walks a great Irishman, with a big stick under his arm.

"May Saint Pather kape 'em out," sez he, and then, true as my name is Charity Grinder, he put his arms around her waist and kissed her!

The idee o' a respectable help allowin' herself tu be kissed! But the hull world is goin' backwards intu wickedness, like Uncle Pratt's wagon backed off intu the mill crick! When I

was young no gal never allowed no feller tu kiss her—leastways none never durst attempt it tu me. Thinks me, "Jest you wait, that's all. You'll hear of this."

But I tell you 'twas gettin' mighty cold in the kitching pantry. You see I'd took off my gownd and had on my nightgownd and a pair o' slippers. 'Twas a caution, the way I shivered.

B.meby they got talkin' of her missus, and she told what a temper she had, and how she locked up things.

"No such thing as a poor gal gettın' a bit o' cake for lunch," sez she, "without it's give out. But I wish ye'd been here, Pat, yestherday, for I laid the best half of a chicken to the cat, the while it was hid undher me bed, for a bit o' supper. There's nothin' for ye now but some cowld mutton."

"That'll be wilcome," sez he, and she went down cellar and fetched it up.

Then sez she, "I'll get ye a pickle," and into the pantry she walks.

I stood flat against the wall, hopin' how't she wouldn't see me; but, land o' liberty! the next minute she looked u and gin a awful howl, and rushed out and banged the door.

"What's the matther, honey?" sez the man.

Sez she, "Och, there's a ghost in it, tin feet high."

I had my nightgownd on, and I hain't a doubt but what I did look ethereal. 'Tain't tu be wondered at the gal took me for a spook

"A ghost, is it?" sez he, and open he pulls the door.

"Howly murther, it is!" sez he, and with that out he pulls a

pistol, and ef I live tu the age o' old Hale I sha'n't never forget my sensations.

"Don't!" I hollered, "I'm Miss Charity Grinder!"

Sez he, "It's spakin' to me! Say a bit iv an *ave* fur me, Biddy darlint, or I'm lost!" and bang, bang, bang went the pistol.

I yelled each time, but that didn't do no good. The more I screeched the more he shot his pistol; and the more I said "I'm Miss Charity Grinder," the more he considered how 'twas a spook from t'other place addressin' him.

I lifted up first one foot and then t'other, and I scrouched down, and I leaned over, and I couldn't budge one way nor t'other fur fear o' tumblin' off the barril; and whenever I hear anybody braggin' like old Miss Scotchcake does, how't their boys is "good shots," I'll tell 'em they wouldn't be so glad if they'd ever been a target like me that night. The best thing pistols kin du, is not tu hit the mark.

Well, the help, she'd run down to the grocery man's, and cum back with him and his big dog; and he was just as Dutch as anybody ever I see—couldn't speak a word a Christian could understand; and when he was told 'twas spooks, nat'rally he thought that was American for robbers. Fust he said:

"Oh, mien Got, so much droubles for Miss Barker."

Then he sot his dog on in Dutch, and then he run for more help.

The dog, he come clear down tu the eend o' the long pantry. It was a good long one, with a windy in it, as big as some places

York folks calls rooms, and there he jumped up ontu the barril with his fore paws, and barked and bit at my ankles. Wonder I didn't guv up the spook. I was near about skeered to death. He was barkin' and Biddy screamin', and Pat beatin' on the door with his stick, when in came a couple o' neighbors.

One was a little short old man, and one a tall young 'un. You see, I could see out, 'cause the kitching was light, and they couldn't see in, 'cause the pantry store-closet was dark.

Sez the old gentleman :

"How now—what's the matter?"

"It's a ghost!" sez Biddy.

"Tut, tut," sez the old gentleman.

"Thrue for ye," sez Pat. "I seen the face, and it's the divil, more betoken three shots went clane threw him widout hurtin' a hair."

"Nonsense, nonsense," sez the young gentleman. "The devil don't hide in pantries. It's a housebreaker."

"Thin we'll all be murthered in our gory beds," sez Biddy, banging the door tight on me and the dog.

The dog barked and I screamed.

"Oh, lemme out! I'm the wretched victim o' a most drefful mistake! I'm Charity Grinder o' Peekskill."

But they didn't hear me for the noise.

Purty soon the young man peeks in.

"The burgulars is a hidin' tu the further eend," sez I.

"How many on 'em, Lawyer Trats?" sez the old gentleman.

"Near as I can see, two," sez he. "Look yourself doctor."

Doctor he looks.

"I see four!" sez he.

"We can't cope with 'em," says Lawyer Trats. "We must barrycade the door and send for a possy o' perlice. Fetch 'em, Bridget."

And then I heerd 'em pilin' up the kitching table and refrigerator, and cookin' stove and things agin the door.

"Did you notice whether they was armed?" sez the lawyer.

"Yes," sez the lawyer. "I think I observed a double-barreled gun in one o' their hands."

Purty soon there was an awful trampin' that I reckoned was the possy a comin', and sure enough I heerd the lawyer say:

"Do yer know you hain't done yer dooty in this here case, perlicemen? Here's a citizen's home invaded by a gang o' burgulars, and none o' you on hand for a hour or more. It's a case o' deriflection from dooty."

"Nun o' yer sass, young man," sez one perlice. "Tend to the subjec', for our time's precious. Where's the burglars?"

"In the store-closet," sez the doctor. "We've had a conflict, but succeeded in imprisonin' 'em. The dog is on guard inside."

"Yah, yah," sez the Dutchman. "Good tog."

"How many on 'em air they," sez a perlice.

"Three," sez Lawyer Trats.

"Four," sez the doctor.

"So many ash den," sez the Dutchman.

"Form in ranks," sez the perlice. "Clubs out. Don't use

yer weppins until the last minnit, but hev 'em ready for immediate use."

I heerd every word, and I screeched and danced up and down on the barril, and in a minnit in went the head and me and my ruffled dimity nightgownd and the kerosene ile lamp intu as full a barril o' pickled pork as ever was put up.

"Murder!" sez I. "Bow-wow," sez the dog, and in marches the perlice, and out they drags me, drippin'.

"It is a ghost," sez Biddy. "It's the divil," sez Pat. "Has nobody got a bit of a howly-bone or the like for a poor boy to howld on by. Sind for the praste. Sind for the sisthers. It's the divil himself in a nightcap."

"This is a pretty thing tu call us out for," sez a perlice. "This ain't nuthin' but petty larceny."

"Probably the others has escaped," sez the doctor.

"I ain't a petty larcenee," sez I. "I am Miss Grinder, from Peekskill, onto a visit tu York. Oh! spare my money and take my life—I mean t'other way. Don't send me to the Tombs, nor Sing Sing. How'd ye like tu be hung yerself, beside being shot at and bit by a Dutch mad dog, and up tu yer neck in souse?"

"Is she out of her mind?" sez the perlice.

"Plainly," sez the doctor.

"It's all pretense to evade arrest," sez the lawyer.

And as Biddy had never seen me, bein' gone out when I come, I dunno what might hev happened ef just then Mr. and Mrs. Hopkins Barker hadn't come hum. They told who I be, of course, and reskied of me. The minnit the house was clear I

went intu spasms, and kep' 'em up as long as I could, and I sha'n't forgive the Barkers for the way they acted, and for her sayin' :

"If you'd kept out o' other people's closets you wouldn't have got intu such a scrape."

Sez I, "I hope you don't expect *me* o' meddlin'."

"Only of prying," sez she.

"In that case," sez I, "I'll darken yer ruff no longer."

"As you please," sez she.

So as soon as I'd had my breaktwist next morning—that's this—I went. Me hevin' been in the barril, of course they couldn't use the pork, and they gin it away, charitable like, tu a poor Irish famerly. They didn't know about the kerosene lamp bein' at the bottom, and I forgot tu tell 'em. So jest as I started the man they gin it tu brung the lamp round and was threatenin' tu hev the life o' Mr. Hopkins Barker for tryin' tu pison his children. Dunno how it ended, for I didn't stay.

Oh! Partheny, I fetched that dimity gownd along fur you tu du up fur me. And let's hev dinner, or lunch, or suthin' as soon as you kin, fur the excitement has made me faint.

NUMBER FIFTEEN.

HOW CHARITY GRINDER ELOPES WITH COLONEL KATERMOUNT.

I du think Miss Colonel Katermount was the jealousest critter ever I did see. She never let the colonel hev a minnit's peace o' his life from the time she tuk his name down tu the last I seen of her; and 'twarn't as ef the man had been a gay Otheller, neither. He never done nothin' fur tu exasperate her; and as fur admirin' o' wimmin, the one he hed was enough tu make him disgusted with the hull bilin'.

She didn't think so, though. I du b'lieve she'd a got jealous of an old bunnit without no head in it, ef the colonel hed looked at it. He didn't durst speak tu a little gal o' fourteen nor a old woman o' seventy; and in church, ef he looked off his book, she nudged him with her elber, and kept him awake all night a talkin' o' the imperpriety o' a married man starin' at the gals. As fur the fair sect, she *did* think they was all dyin' o' love fur Colonel Katermount.

He was an awful humbly man, too. What he had left of his hair was red, and he'd hed the small-pox, and there was one big wart on his nose, and another onto his chin. Besides, poor man, he hed a wooden leg, and was cross-eyed; but, bless you,

ef he'd been Apolly hisself, she couldn't a had a bigger idee o' his powers o' fascernation.

I used ter ollers go tu tea tu Miss Colonel Katermount's when the colonel was out, ef I could, 'cause, ef you coughed or blow'd yer nose, she thought 'twas a secret signal, and ef you spoke tu him she got mad, and ef you didn't she considered 'twas tu deceive her, and you talked all the more behind her back.

She was pertickler jealous o' me, 'cause when we was both young gals the colonel used to be quite intimate tu our house, and she knowed that, ef I'd been a mind tu, I could ha' been Miss Colonel Katermount.

"Did he propose?"

Well, not exactly. But I know he would ef I'd encouraged him. Didn't though. Whenever I seed him comin' tu offer me his attentions, I used tu stick up my nose and prance away like a queen.

Well, they'd been married twenty years or so, when we had a new minister over our church. The old one hevin' evinced a dispersition to be a Universaller, went so fur as tu say he didn't know but even old tipsy Jenkins, that was found dead to the tavern one night, might git tu heaven, and that 'twarn't Christian-like tu be sartin o' the ultimate destination o' nobody. Consequently, we hed another in his place, and in proper time we give him a donation party.

Brother Jonathan and me was a goin'. He took a cheese, and I took a caliker dress patron fur the minister's wife; and bein' 'twas quite a distance, we went intu the waggin. Lots o'

folks come in waggins that night, on account o' the things they brung along. 'Mong 'em was Miss Colonel Katermount. They fetched a side o' bacon and a bushel o' turnips. Me and Jonathan and them got there fust, so we nat'rally fell tu talkin'.

"How air you all?" sez I. "Hain't seen ye fur an age."

"Well," sez she, "we're as well as kin be expected. Hev you heerd how't my married darter, Sophrony, has got a heir?"

"A what?" sez I.

"A son and heir," sez she. "We're goin' over there tu-night. Thought we'd stop tu the party fust, and then ride out. It's a good piece, and we calkerlate tu stay a spell; me, anyway, fur while Sophrony is shut up up stairs, ef there ain't nobody tu watch, like as not Mr. Butterbanks will go a kissin' the gal."

"Du tell," sez I. "Well, you hain't much o' a opinion o' the men sect, Miss Colonel Katermount."

"Nobody o' a penetratin' mind has," sez she. "There's secrets in my buzzim what nobody knows on. I ain't a goin' tu mention 'em; but they're in my journal, and I've got a brother down in York that'll publish 'em arter my decease. Then the world will larn about what wimmin has tu bear."

"There's some men different from other some," sez I.

"There may be," sez she. "But the heft o' them that's gifted with the snare o' beauty, like the colonel, is alike."

I didn't make no remark when she said that, and I went tu talk tu the rest o' the folks I seed comin' in. It was a pecooliar kind o' a church—there wasn't no sociabillitude, and on occasions like this here half o' the folks stared at the other half as ef

they was afeard they'd bite. Elder Ninepin used to introduce folks, but they wouldn't stay introduced. They'd put on their best things and go tu the church sociable, and things, and sit with their noses in the air until the minister would say, "Now we'll close this here delightful evenin' with a hymn," and then he'd give one out, and nobody wouldn't sing only him, and then they'd hand the plate round and go. This here donation party was purty much like the rest, and when the hymn was sung, I went tu Jonathan, and sez I:

"Du come along, I'm sleepy."

Sez he, "I've got a word or two tu say tu Brother Ninepin; you go along down and get intu the waggin, and I'll come—it stands right o' the door, tied tu the fence."

Well, seein' I was sleepy, I thought I would. So I bid the folks good-by, and went down and got intu the waggin, wrapped up so you couldn't see my nose, and before Jonathan got down I was a'most asleep. He warn't much o' a talker, so I warn't surprised when he didn't make no remark, and we driv along a spell without speakin'. That made me sleepier, so I put my head agin the waggin cover and snored away in good earnest in less than five minutes.

When I woke 'twas a snowin', and it seemed to me we'd been a good while on the road. I nudged Jonathan, and sez I

"Ain't we most there?"

And sez he, from under his comforter:

"Not half."

I never heerd his voice so gruff before. Sez I:

"You've took cold."

"I hain't," sez he.

"You hev," says I. "You're as hoarse as a raven. How it snows!"

"Yes," sez he. "Shouldn't wonder ef I'd lost my way."

"Should think you'd know it blindfold," sez I. "Beside, 'tain't long enough to lose."

Sez he, "It's five mile."

"Hey?" sez I, thinkin' he'd gone crazy.

"Five good," sez he; "and there's the fork. Ef I hev got off the track 'twas at the fork. I'll know purty soon now."

"Why, Jonathan, hev you been drinkin'?" sez I, skeered out o' my senses.

When I said Jonathan, he gave a start.

"Land o' liberty!" sez he, "what are you callin' me Jonathan for? Either I'm gettin' deaf, or that ain't Miss Colonel Katermount's voice.

"Of course it ain't," sez I. "And you ain't Jonathan Grinder!"

"I'm blest ef I am," sez he. "I'm Colonel Katermount."

The hull horror o' my sittywation rushed onto me with a bang, and sez I:

"Oh, dredful suz! How have we got conglomerated? I hain't no business tu be travellin' with a married man, much less at this here solemn hour o' midnight. There ain't nuthin' can't be said agin me now. Oh! drive back, colonel, as you vally the opinion of serciety,"

"Serciety!" sez he. "I ain't a thinkin' o' them, but o' Miss Colonel Katermount. She's been bad enough when she hadn't no reason; what'll she be when she has?"

"'Tain't too late for tu repair our errer," sez I. "Oh! drive back, du."

Sez he, "The difficulty is tu du it. Ef we're in the right road, I kin. Ef we ain't, how kin I? Hows'ever I'll try."

So he turned the hoss, and away we galloped, most pitchin' me out, when we hit agin stones, and the snow was fallin', and it was pitch dark, and arter a while the old hoss tumbled, and down he come.

Colonel Katermount got out and tried to boost him, but it warn't no use.

"Here's a awful state o' things," sez he. "Dunno more'n the man in the moon where we be. I'm goin' down tu where I see a light, tu ask. Don't you be skeered, Miss Grinder."

When he'd said that he went away, and 'twas a quarter o' an hour afore he came back. Then there was a man along o' him, and he hed a lantern.

"Hev you any notion where you be?" sez he.

"No," sez I.

"Ten miles from Peekskill," sez he. "It's the wrong road, and ef you hed the old hoss on his legs agin you couldn't get back till mornin'."

Then was heerd three awful groans.

'Twas me expirin'.

Well, they looked at the old hoss, and he was gin out—no

makin' *him* go; and we couldn't walk ten miles, and there wasn't no stage that night, and all we could du was tu go tu the tavern.

The lady that kep' it, when she heerd my story, gin me her sympathy, and fetched out some brandy and water, and was quite motherly; but nuthin' couldn't swage my woes nor the colonel's. He sot with his head onto his hands, and every word she sed to comfort him he'd shake it, and say:

"Much obleeged, mum, but you don't know my wife. Ef you had the pleasure o' Miss Colonel Katermount's acquaintance you'd understand my feelin's."

And as fur me, I shouldn't hev expected nobody tu think nuthin' o' my moral rectitude ef I hadn't gone intu the very worst o' highstrikes, and kep' intu 'em all night.

Next mornin', lo and behold! the snow was deeper than it hed been for ten years afore, and the hoss warn't able to budge, and the stage warn't goin' tu run, even as fur as the railway, until the next day, and there warn't no vehicle tu be hed. Colonel Katermount tried to walk it, and got half froze, and we was in despair.

The landlady wept with me the hett o' the day, and the colonel he tried to drown his sorrers in ale. It got intu his head, and they had tu put him tu bed at three in the arternoon. It did seem tu me I should go crazy. That night I didn't sleep none, and when the stage come I was ready, and so was the colonel. The landlady was goin' along, at our request, tu explain things, and the colonel was goin' tu pay her for goin'. I sobbed so all

the way hum that everybody in the stage asked what that interestin' lady was a weepin' fur.

The stage run clear tu Peekskill, and when we got out the fust person we met was a newsboy, a sellin' the Peekskill *Patriot.* He come up to the colonel, and sez he:

"Hev a paper, sir? Interesting elopement in religious circles—awful disclosures concernin' a prominent gentleman."

The colonel he turned white as he could, and sez he:

"I'll take a paper, boy," and he paid him and took it.

Land o' Goshen! the fust thing was headed with them words the boy had spoke, and when he read it out I thought I should faint.

"Awful disclosures concerning a distinguished gentleman and a lady hitherto considered a model o' exemplary conduct."

Then it went on tu tell how't we was at a delightful party together, and in the midst o' the evenin' he contrived to evade the observation o' his pardner and elope.

It described the anguish o' Miss Colonel Katermount, and spoke o' us in dreadful terms.

I swooned the moment the colonel hed got through readin' on't. But I got over it immediate, because 'twas necessary to go to our places o' residence as soon as possible.

Folks was gettin' up, and the heft on 'em stared at us as if we'd been ghosts.

When we come to the colonel's house there was a red flag at the door, and a man standing on the stoop. He was a stranger, and the colonel walks up tu him, and sez he:

"Hullo, sir, who be you?"

Sez he, "You'd better be civil."

Sez the colonel, "I am."

"Oh!" sez he, "in that case I don't mind tellin' you I'm Mr. Higgs, come down to auction off the desirable furniture o' this here family mansion. The things is all good, and we're sellin' 'em for the benefit o' a deserted wife that's been abandoned by her spouse, and is goin' home to her parents."

"Hey?" sez the colonel, "you air, air you?"

And he squares off and hits the auctioneer in his waistcoat, and he hollers, and out comes Miss Colonel Katermount's brother and flies at the colonel, and out comes Miss Colonel Katermount herself and flies at me, and had me in ribbons in a minnit; and I hollered and she screeched, and we kept at it until we both swooned.

The poor landlady told me arterward how't she never had such a time before as she had then explainin' matters, and arter everybody else believed her, Miss Colonel Katermount wouldn't.

All she'd say, pintin' at me in a state o' bunnit that you'd a thought 'ud a moved the heart o' any o' the female sect, was:

"I'll tear her eyes out!"

And the only wonder is she didn't.

Me and she never spoke arterward. And fust place Colonel Katermount sued the paper for a libel, and then the auctioneer he sued him for 'salt and battery. And I often sit and reflect how onsartain life is, and how much was brought about by me gettin' into the wrong waggin.

NUMBER SIXTEEN.

CHARITY GOES HOUSE-HUNTING.

Jemmimy Brisket and me ain't no relation. I've heered some o' these Yorkers has said how't Charity Grinder was endeavorin to establish relationships where none didn't exist. So I state plainly how't she and me ain't none. Her pa was my mother's brother, and they quarreled, and didn't hev nuthin' tu say tu each other. However, she and me was allers intimate, and I went tu see her as soon as ever I could find her direction.

She was in a peck o' troubles, and the first words she said were these :

"Oh, Charity, Charity, I du expect tu be homeless. There ain't nobody will take us in."

"Why, what's the matter?" sez I.

Sez she, "We've gin up our house and it's let over our heads, and there ain't none tu be had. We can't afford a nine-story residence, with brown stone fronts and floors; they won't let to them that has children, and there ain't no small houses, and we've got tu set in the streets. I spend the heft o' the time in the street, and the gal explodes the kerosene lamp and tumbles down stairs with the baby, and the big children sets fire tu the

house, and Araminty has the young man I disapprove of callin' on her; and Washington Jefferson smokes cigars every time I go out, and Mr. Brisket, he hain't time to go."

"Lawful suz!" sez I, "what did ye think o' movin' fur?"

Sez she, "Why, Mr. Brisket don't only get nine hundred a year, and this here home is riz tu a thousand. Of course, if we was tu live here, we couldn't calkerlate tu pay the rent at all."

"Well," sez I, "York folks is all gone crazy together, I reckon. Tell you what I'll du. I'll go a house-huntin' for ye. I'll jest hev my things fetched here, and it won't be no trouble. I like tu see how folks lives."

So that's the way I come tu be a house-huntin'.

* * * * * *

"How many rooms did you say you had tu let, mum?"

"Second floor and back basement."

"Oh, well, I'd like tu see 'em."

"Can't until ten."

"Oh, pshaw! I've heerd jest how I'd be treated, but I ain't tu be put off. Excuse me fur goin' up fust. Land o' Liberty! ye needn't look so mad. Is this the parlor? 'Tis, hey? Well, I've seen dirty paint, but never the equal o' this here? Don't you never scrub it? Well, I reckon 'twill come clean, so that don't make no difference. The paper ain't so bad. Whose portrait is that? Your'n? Du tell. Why, I should a' thought some good-lookin' woman sot for it. It's got real good clothes on tu, but I suppose you've got them fur best. If 'tain't a impertinent question, where du you keep clothes in this place? I

don't see no closets. Be *these* bedrooms? Why, they hain't no windys. Not a morsel o' air, and ye can't get around the bed tu make it. That is a new patron patch-quilt, ain't it? Seems tu me I never seen it before. I'll jest look at it, so's tu get the patron. Du you know them pillercases ain't felled? You thought I wanted tu see the house, and not the bed things? So I du. This is the dining-room, hey? Well, ef 'twas furnished up nice, it might look better. Though, after all, it's kinder skewjawed. I'd like tu see the closet. It's only shelves, hey? Well, a body wants tu see before they hire, shelves or not. Now for the kitchen. Can't I wait until to-morrow? Oh, laws a mussy, no! How d'ye know any on us will ever see to-morrow. 'Tain't a Christian duty to procrastinationate. That your little boy? He's awful thick-complected. You'd orter give him suthin' for his blood.

"Wall, ef you call this a kitchen, why, I've got a spice-box full as big tu Peekskill. Hain't been whitewashed for a spell, I reckon.

"Clean it up, and it's better, I suppose. You mustn't be offended by my plain remarks. You see I allers come out jest as I feel, up and down.

"A bad habit? Why, land o' liberty! it's considered the amiablest treat o' my character up tu hum. Fact is, where the truth ain't pleasant, folks doesn't like tu hear on't, nat'rally.

"Jest makin' tea, ain't you? Well, as I'm up so early, I'll jest take a cup, and don't trouble yourself for me. Slice o' that cake in the closet is plenty. How on arth du you come to

breaktwist so late? Husband was out last night, and ain't up, I suppose? He don't drink nur nuthin', does he? Sartinly not! Lawful suz! you needn't perk up so—the heft o' the men sect dues. That's the reason I hain't never united myself in the bounds o' wedded bliss. Didn't calkerlate 'twas pleasant to hev nobody comin' in whenever they was disposed, and mebbe goin' tu bed with ther boots on. Kurnel Jingle used to hev his spurs, tu, but he was a millingtary ossifer, and them is wuss than most o' the men sect as fur as mortals goes. Put another pinch o' tea in, fur I don't like weak slops, and I'll take another cup, since you're so pressing.

"Any more rooms? Kitching, dining-room, parlor, bed-rooms, ef you call 'em so—I should say rat-holes. What's this here? It belongs tu the apartments, but I'd better not go in? Why not?

"You wouldn't advise me tu? Why, land o' liberty! I mean tu see the hull before I go. Door kinder sticks, hey? There it goes——

"Oh!—ah!—ooh!—my!—gracious goodness! There's a indelicate man in there a bathin' hisself.

"Oh! ah! What doin's! You told me not to go in, because Mr. Brown was performing his toilet. Land o' liberty! why didn't you say so? I sha'n't get over this here in a hurry. Ain't you got a glass o' wine nor nuthin' tu resusitate my spirits? Fetch a fan, du.

"Well, I did think better o' yer delicacy. You'd orter be

ashamed o' yerself! It seems tu me you might blush instead o' grinnin'.

"How soon du you calkerlate tu move? Not till fust o' May. Du I suppose I'll take the house? Why, I'm huntin' fur a friend, and of course 'twon't suit her. Eleven in fammerly, besides it's tu dirty—she's used to a nice place. And then, didn't I tell ye she'd made up her mind tu go to Brooklyn, found the place, and signed papers and all. I jest thought I'd see what some more houses was like before I stopped. You wonder at my impudence, hey? Law, du you? I'd hev you tu know that I wonder at yourn; but them that's dirty is ginerally sassy, and I don't expect much o' Yorkers, anyhow! Good-mornin'. I was ollers fetched up to remember good manners, ef you wasn't. My mar was a lady, and my Aunt Tibbs a member o' the fust serciety. I ain't used to associatin' with no low people, and as for the abuse o' such a nasty, ineddicated critter as you, I'd answer it back, only I won't so abase myself. Good mornin'."

NUMBER SEVENTEEN.

CHARITY DISCOVERS A SECRET.

I never did think much o' Pamela Pondicherry—never. When she was a gal, by the name o' Pamela Tid, she was always kinder hity-tity—tu fixy tu suit me. I warn't never took in by her as some was. "Handsome is as handsome does," sez I; jest wait and see. And I did wait, and I and the rest o' us seen.

Can't say she ever let the cloven foot peek out very plain while she was a gal, but she winded up by elopin' with Packenham Pondicherry. Afore her folks caught up with 'em, they was united in bonds o' matermony by the Rev. Silas Speers.

That warn't, tu my way o' thinkin', a very creditable way of steppin' off. But 'twas done, and they couldn't du nuthin' tu prevent it, so they jest sot and took it. Old Mr. Tid said how't he'd disown Pamely; but seein' he didn't hev nuthin' tu speak on, only a house with a mortgage ontu it about three times its vally (couldn't ha' bin? Why, I know it on the first authority), and an old hoss, that was blind o' an eye, and lame o' a leg, and there was three sons tu divide amongst arter Miss Tid, his pardner, had had her thirds. Pamely didn't lose much.

Mr. Pondicherry is intu the customus now. He was a kind

o' a clerk, or suthin' there. 'Twarn't considered much o' a match; but he has clim up amazin'—scum rises, you know. 'Twas said how't old Miss Pondicherry went out washin'.

Well, arter I'd been tu York a spell, Maria sez tu me:

"Seen anythin' o' Pamely sence you come?"

"No," sez I, "I hain't."

Sez she, "They're livin' in fust-rate style. He's in the customus, and the daughters is highly accomplished. You'd orter go and see 'em."

"Reckon I will," sez I. So I took the direction, and went up there, with some things in a portmantle, the next day.

"Why, land o' liberty!" sez she, when she sot eyes on me; "'tain't you?"

"'Tis," sez I. "But how awful fat you be, Pamely. Is it dropsy, or du you hev your helth?"

Sez she, "I'm very well, thank you; and I'm not considered fat by my friends—a little *on bong pwan*." (That's what she said; what she meant, I dunno.) "A little *on bong pwan* is considered becoming."

"So it is," sez I; for I reckoned 'twas some highfalutin word, and I warn't a-goin' tu giv in tu Pamely Pondicherry. "And how's Packenham?"

"He's purty well," sez she. "Attention tu business ruther wears onto him; but he's purty well."

"Glad tu hear it," sez I. "And I du suppose the young uns is purty well growed up."

Sez she, "They're all tu boardin'-school—won't you take off your things?"

"Of course I will," sez I. "I've come tu stay a week."

She didn't speak as perlite as she'd orter, I thought, when I said that; but, lor, if she hadn't no manners 'twarn't my fault.

She sent the gal to show me a spare bedroom, and had lunch at wonst—a purty respectable kind o' a lunch, tu. Land o' liberty! the airs she took tu—'twould a made any one larf that could a seen her and remembered Pamely Tid, with her sleeves rolled up, whitewashin' the kitchen—a nigger behind her cheer, and pink wash-hand glasses fur tu dip yer fingers in. I took a drink before I knowed what they was.

Well, there hain't much to tell about the fust few days. We had our reg'lar meals, and went tu bed and got up. The things I'm now about to depicter occurred, or begun for tu occur, a Thursday. That night him and her went tu a ball—they might a took me, but they didn't offer tu, so I staid tu hum. She asked me where I'd prefer for tu set, and I said in my own room. So I had a fire there, and made myself comfortable.

My objeck in settin' there was tu be handy tu her room. There was suthin' there I'd made up my mind tu investigate for the sake o' maintainin' them there rules o' moral rectitude which air necessary for the well-bein' o' serciety. I warn't inquisitorial —I'd scorn it—but I did desire tu know what on airth Pamely Packenham had intu her desk.

I allers knowed she was kinder hity-tity, and I felt sure she had a secret; and there was suthin' in the way she locked up

that desk that excited my suspicions. I'd read enough o' fash ionable serciety tu know how holler it was, and I made up my mind that if Pamely was a carryin' on, I'd expose her. What she could hev in the desk I didn't know, but I had a presentiment how't I should diskiver it.

I waited until the heft o' the help was abed, and then I jest went intu Pamely's room—'twas next tu mine—and got her keys—I knowed where they was kept—and opened that there desk. 'Twas a leetle one, and inside there was a lot o' writin' paper, and a gold pen, and a ink bottle, shape o' a cullud purson (you took off his head and there was the ink), and there was a pen-wiper, and a lot o' stamps and enveloyps. Nuthin' for tu satisfy my suspections in all them; but behind there was a lot o' pigin' holes full o' letters. Now ef a woman or a gal goes tu carryin' on, you may be sure you'll find there's letters mixed up with the preceedins somehow.

So I fetched them letters intu my room, and sot down tu read 'em. Fust off there was some from her ma, and her brother Zeke. Next there was bills and things, and some invites tu parties. And then there was a rubbish o' letters, mixed up promiscus, from this and that and 'tuther, not a word wuth readin in the hull bilin'. I began tu think Miss Pamely Pondicherry was tu deep for me arter all.

And jest as I began tu think so I come across a bundle o' letters tied up with blue ribbon, and when I opened them—land o' liberty! ef they warn't love letters. Every one on 'em love letters o' the most pertickler kind, and begun, "My ever dear

Pamely," or "My angel," or "Sweetest," or suthin' o' the sort. She must a answered the hull o' 'em, tu. They warn't signed reg'lar—the villain was tu deep for that—and the enveloyps was torn; but I knowed 'twas Pamely Pondicherry they was writ tu, and I knowed now what kind o' critter she must be.

Sez I to myself, "Charity Grinder, what is your duty tu du in this here?"

And sez I, in answer, "You should feel tu be thankful how't it's been throwed in your way tu accidentally diskiver iniquity, and you should tell Mr. Pondicherry how't he's been nourishin' a viper intu his buzzum tu the fust oppertunity."

Sez I, "I *will*."

And I put the rest o' the letters back, and locked the desk, and put the others under my piller, and slept the sleep o' conscious respectability.

Next mornin' I was up airly, washed and combed, and cleaned my teeth before the clock struck six. Then I went down, and sot in the parlor until I heerd Mr. Pondicherry comin' past. He allers took his breaktwist before anybody else, so's tu be off in season. She was a reg'lar sleepy head—never ris till nine.

When I heerd him, I steps out, and sez I:

"Mr. Pondicherry, I'd like tu hev a few minutes o' private conversation with you."

Sez he, "Sartainly, Miss Grinder."

And in he comes, and I shuts the door, and sez I:

"It's my painful duty for tu reveal a very afflictin' circum-

stance. 'Tain't agreeable tu my feelings for tu do so, but the cause of respectabilitude demands it."

"Ah," sez he; "suthin' regardin' a servant?"

"No," sez I. "It's closer hum, Mr. Pondicherry. It's in relation tu the pardner o' your buzzum."

"To who?" sez he.

"To Miss Pamela Pondicherry," sez I.

"Gracious goodness!" sez he.

Sez I, "I feel tu sympathize with you, sir."

"Go on," sez he. "Go on."

Sez I, "It's a painful duty, but I will. Circumstances, what I hadn't no control over, has accidentally throwed me in the way o' diskiverin' how't Miss Pondicherry has got a beau, and bein' a married woman—I blush tu speak on't."

"A beau!" sez he. "Oh, your mistaken—quite mistaken. She allows no one——"

Sez I, "I hev the proofs. She's been tu the theayter with him; she's met him o' a moonlight night, by appointment, and she's goin' tu elope with him a Thursday next. She calls you a tyrant, and sez how't she ain't a-goin' tu put up with it no longer; and she calls him her dear, and her lover, because he repeats them sentiments out o' her letters in his'n."

When I said that, Mr. Pondicherry begun tu stamp and clinch his fists, and sez he:

"Who is the rascal? Who is he? Tell me his name!"

"I dunno that," sez I; "but these here is his letters, and perhaps you can diskiver for yourself."

He snatched them from me tu wonst, and sez he:

"Who could hev suspected it? False as fair, woman, thy name is treachery."

And he tore at his hair, and stamped, and flung himself on the sofy, and groaned. By and by he riz up, and sez he:

"You see before you a broken-hearted wretch, Miss Grinder. Words can't tell how I hev adored that woman."

Sez I, "I feel tu be sorry fur ye."

"You can't understand my feelings," sez he. "Nobody could. But I will not act until I am calmer. I will wait until to-night before I—ah!—oh!

And he kinder howled, and rushed out o' the house.

I kept my eyes on Miss Pondicherry all day, I tell ye. And whenever she took tu airs, I sez tu myself, "There's a rod in pickle for you, my dear. You won't hold yer head so high to-morrow." And 'twas amusin' tu see how she tossed her head, and turned up her nose, when you knowed what she actually was. Tell ye, I was actually tickled when I heerd the door open that night, and seen Mr. Pondicherry.

He walked in, the color o' a spook, and he shets the door and locks it, and sez he, lookin' at his wife:

"Oh, Pamely! Pamely! Oh!"

Sez she, "Oh, mercy! What is the matter, my dear?"

Sez he, "Don't be a hypocrite, Pamely."

"No, don't," sez I.

"Law!" sez she, "what *has* happened?"

Sez he, "The wreck of all my earthly hopes."

"You ain't failed?" sez she.

He walks up tu her, and sez he:

"Fiend! Traitoress! Sarpent!"

"Well," sez she, "hev you gone mad?"

Sez he, "I hev discovered your treachery. Tell me his name."

"Who's name!" sez she.

"The writer o' these letters," sez he.

She put on the biggest heap o' astonishment, and sez she:

"Let me see them."

"No," sez he. "I shall keep 'em for proofs. I shall hev a divorce, ma'am. I hev your love letters here, ma'am—your love letters."

"It's news to me, ef I've got any," sez she, cool as a cucumber. "Where did you find 'em?"

"I owe the diskivery tu Miss Grinder," sez he.

"And where did you get them?" sez she.

"Out o' your desk," sez I. "I seen you when you leetle thought o' bein' observed; and I calkerlate to put down sich carryins on wherever I diskiver 'em. You're a disgrace tu the wummen sect," sez I.

"Ah!" sez she. "Well, I missed some letters, and ef you'll be kind enough to read 'em out, I'll tell you who writ 'em."

Sez he, "Your audacity beats everything, woman. Listen, then, viper:

"'Dearest Pamela—I have but a moment to spare; but I

seize upon it to send these few lines on the wings of love, per boy, to you.

"'To-night the tyrant, whose heart could never have been young, will be absent, I am informed. Meet me, then, beneath the rays of the moon, and ramble for a brief but blissful hour with him who adores you.'"

"What do you say to that, ma'am?" sez I.

She shrugged her shoulders, and he went on.

"Here is another:

"'Lovey, can you elude the vigilance of you know who, and go with me to see the Lady of Lyons, to-night? One more hour in your presence I must have. I long to feel your hand upon my arm—to look into your eyes. I kiss the paper twice, thrice; but the boy, our confidential messenger, is waiting. Adieu.'"

"How du ye feel now, you disgrace tu respectabilitude?" sez I. "You won't stick your nose up quite so high again I reckon."

She tossed her head and laughed, as brazen as you please.

"Next comes this awful disclosure," sez he.

"'Sweetest angel—all is prepared for our flight. On Thursday night the cab will be in waiting. Oh, bliss to call you mine! Oh, rapture!—my soul!—my seraph! be in time, and guard against detection. Your devoted lives in an agony of suspense until he clasps you to his bosom!'

"There are more of 'em," sez Mr. Pondicherry, "but I shall read no more. The name, unhappy woman, the name?"

Miss Pondicherry got up and shrugged her shoulders, and sez she:

"Well, I should hev thought you'd hev known who 'twas by this time. Look at the date, and you'll find that it's 1858; and maybe you'll remember your own old love letters. *You* wrote every one of 'em yourself."

Mr. Pondicherry stared, and opened his mouth, and looked at the tops o' the letters, and then he pitched 'em on the floor, and rushed across the room, and begun, straight before me, to hug and kiss Miss Pondicherry.

Sez he, "Forgive me!"

Sez she, "You old goose, you don't deserve it, but I will."

Then he comes across tu me.

"Where shall I tell the carriage tu drive tu?" sez he.

"What carriage?" sez I.

"Mine," sez he. "I shall order it tu take you home; and I beg you will never enter my doors agin."

"Marsy sakes!" sez I. "Is this the way you treat me fur duin' you a service? You'd orter be grateful to me; and, what's more, if I ain't found nuthin' out about Miss Pondicherry, that ain't tu say there isn't nuthin'——"

He rings the bell, and sez he:

"Thomas, the carriage fur Miss Grinder."

And I despised him tu much tu say nuthin'.

So here I am, Amandy. How's yer pa? Purty chirk? Glad tu see it. I always was a favorite o' his'n.

NUMBER EIGHTEEN.

CHARITY SAVES JONATHAN FROM A DESIGNING WIDOW.

How are ye, Miss Dusenbury? Purty spry? Wall, considerin' ye always was kinder scrawny you du seem tolerable. How am I? Well, I'm jest able tu crawl. My nerves is so shook. You know I said I'd be here last week, and what d'ye 'spose kept me? I've been back tu Peekskill tu save my brother Jonathan from a designin' widder. Who do I mean? You didn't never know Miss Moriarty, did ye? Used tu be Carline Lumpkins. Warn't married very young, and hadn't old Moriarty come she couldn't get nobody else. He had some money, but she never had a decent gownd tu her back 'till she'd jawed and bothered him out of the world; but when that was done she spent the heft o' what was left in bugles, and sot her cap for another.

What du I mean? Why, land o' Caanan, Miss Dusenbury, hain't you never seen that kind o' mournin'? Looks as ef the individual that wears it was first dipped in gum, and then poked intu a bag o' bugles. There warn't an inch o' Miss Moriarty that hadn't a bunch o' 'em stuck on somehow.

Commin' up the road o' Sundays she shined considerable

more'n the tin peddler. As fur widders' caps, don't never mention 'em in my hearin' agin, Miss Dusenbury, arter what I've seen.

Miss Dusenbury, ef you know any reason why a fat critter o' forty, with red hair and freckles, and eyes the color o' milk and water, should think herself handsome, jest mention it. Sure as I'm a livin' sinner that critter did. So did our Jonathan. Never was so beat out as I was when he said so one day. He was a lookin' out o' the windy with his chin ontu his hands, and his eyes cast up tu the moon, and I'd said twicet, "Time tu retire, Jonathan," afore he spoke.

Then sez he, kinder sleepy like :

"I was a thinkin' which was the good-lookinest female person tu Peekskill."

"Land o' Goshen," sez I, "tu my mind ther ain't much choice. Who've you decided ontu?"

"Miss Moriarty," sez he.

"Hey?" sez I.

"Yes," sez he, "by a bushel full."

"Du tell," sez I. "Why, she's middlin' aged.'

Sez he, "P'raps she ain't so young as some, but then she's got more dignitude, and she's fatter, and when she's drest in her go-tu-meetin's, she shines most."

"Shines?" sez I. "Why, I could shine tu ef I wore bugles."

"Bugles or not, it's what I call queenly," sez he.

Arter that I didn't say nuthin , but I jest shut the windy, and shut him up, and packed him off tu bed.

There warn't nuthin' more said between us, but the next week you may judge o' my emotions when I heerd how't the widdy was goin' tu hire old Koster's place. 'Twas the next tu Jonathan's, and I knowed then, jest as well as I know now, that her only object was to be where she could set her cap at him.

Sez I, tu myself, "It's well fur that misguided man that she's got a sister fur tu purtect him. Ef he was all alone, without nobody of the wimmen sect tu keep an eye ontu her, she'd hev him in a month; fur men is weak-minded critters. Miss Dusenbury and them designin' members o' the sect can come round 'em in the most surprisin' manner; and the older they be the softer they be, seems tu me, like mush-melons."

Well, of course, the minnit Miss Moriarty come down she run over tu see me, and said how't we, bein' such near neighbors, must be sociable, and how't me and my brother must come in often.

"Thank ye," sez I, "I'll come; but Jonathan ain't no great o' a visitor, 'tain't likely I could persuade him."

She tried tu grin, but I could see she was awful discomfiscated.

The next day she sent over tu know whether Mr. Grinder, ef he was goin' tu market, wouldn't jest drive her tu town.

I knowed he'd jump tu du it, but I took keer not tu tell him, and sent back by the gal, Mr. Grinder wasn't a goin, but how't Miss Charity would stop fur her in the gig when she went down.

Bless you, when I got there the critter had a dretful spell o'

newralogy intu her head and couldn't go. I knowed she wouldn't.

Purty soon she screeched that thar was a snake in her garding, and, "Oh, du cum and save me, Mr. Grinder."

And Jonathan he went then. Thar warn't no stoppin' him. But I pitched on my shaker and went tu. Thar was a moderate size o' an earth worm on the path, and I'll bet ten cents she'd digged that up a purpose.

Sez she, "Oh, is it pisonous? Oh! oh!"

Sez Jonathan, "No mum, don't be alarmed," and smashes it with his bute heel.

"Oh!" sez she, "you've saved my life!" and faints away, and he cotches her.

Up marches me at that, and takes her in my arms, and sez I:

"Now you clear out, Jonathan," sez I. "'Twould be onproper fur you fur tu stay; I've got to unhook her."

She comes tu at that, and sez she:

"Oh, don't go, Mr. Grinder! I'm better."

Sez I, "She hain't, Jonathan; you go."

And he scooted.

'Twarn't often Miss Moriarty had had a person o' my detarmination o' mind tu deal with, and she turned acterly green, she was so mad.

"Fetch some feathers fur tu burn," sez I, "and come and slap her hands, Betsey Jane," that was the help.

But Miss Moriarty she sots up, and sez she:

"No matter, thank ye. I'm better. Sorry tu hev troubled ye."

Sez I, "I perceive thar's a wonderful improvement. Good-mornin'," sez I.

Sez she, "Du sot longer."

"No," sez I, "obliged tu ye. My brother don't approve o' wimmin gadding. So I endeavor tu be intu my own hum as much as possible."

She bows and grins, and away I goes, and Jonathan was a settin' ontu our porch a waitin' fur me.

Sez he, "Is she better?"

Sez I, "She warn't never nun the wuss, so you needn't fidget."

And he shet his head.

Arter that the widder let us alone; and when I come away she hadn't spoke tu him fur a month. Didn't expect she would, fur she was makin' her best endivors fur tu ketch Capting Crump, o' the tavern. And even widdys can't marry two tu the same time without being subpœnaed fur burglary.

Well, I'd been in York quite a spell, when one day there came a letter tu me, directed "in haste;" and when I opened it, 'twas from our help, Eveliny Buckstaver, and the contents was sich that I acterelly thought I'd keel over:

"I take up my pen in hand," says the faithful critter, "fur tu have the pleasure of apprising you how't she's cotch't him at last. Oh, why did you leave him, Miss Charity? fur what's only a help, when it comes to widders, and she says, when you say

he's out, 'No matter, I'll wait.' They're tu be married a Monday next, fur he proposed the question tu her in our own back parlor—I had my eye tu the keyhole—and she sez, sez she, 'Yes,' sez she; 'fur,' sez she, 'my feelin's is o' that reciprocal natur that I can't say no. But,' sez she, 'what,' sez she, 'will your sister, Miss Charity, say?' sez she. 'Oh,' sez he—them's the actual words, miss—'Oh,' sez he, 'who in thunder keers what she sez?' sez he. Then he kissed her; and fur the love o' goodness gracious sakes alive, come home immediate, fur, true as you live, she'll hev him Monday ef you don't. Yours, with the greatest of respects, EVELINY BUCKSTAVER.

"P. S.—Hurry, and oblige E. B."

That night I was up tu Peekskill.

When I got hum, land o' liberty! ef the front door warn't painted green and the hall wall papered, and true as you live, the parlor was fixed up with a new carpet, and there was teu new gilt vases on the mantletry.

I gin one look and marched up stairs, and there was Jonathan jest puttin' a new suit o' clothes—white pants and vest—intu his bureau.

He shook all over when I looked at him and sot down.

Sez I, "What's this I hear?"

Sez he, "Haow?"

Sez I, "You know what I'm alludin' tu. Be you goin' tu git married or not?"

"Wall," sez he, "I be."

"At your age?" sez I.

"Better late than never," sez he.

"Deceivin' o' me," sez I.

"Wall," sez he, "I hain't no patience with rows, and I thought I'd do it slick and quiet."

"Oh," sez I, "it's for this I've darned your socks, is it?—and made yer things and kep' house fur ye? Ye're a disgrace tu the men sect. You've hed the priveliges o' female serciety and never knowed what 'twas tu lose a button, and you must marry a widdy—a freckled, red-haired critter——"

"A lot better lookin' than you be," sez he.

"Hey?" sez I.

"Or ever will be, or ever was," sez he.

Then I flowed at him and scratched at his phizmahogany. 'Twarn't behavin' with my usual dignitude, but I *was* exasperated.

Sez I, "Jonathan Grinder," sez I, "ef you think how't I'm goin' fur tu play second fiddle where I've played fust so long, you're mistaken. You can't marry that humly critter."

"How're you goin' ter perwent it?" sez he. "I'm engaged."

Sez I, "No matter—I will."

He sot quite still, and arter a while sez he:

"Come, Charity—you know you'll allers be welcome here—du be friendly."

I didn't say nuthin'. From that minnit on I never spoke tu him. 'Twas a Friday night. Never said a word Saturday nor Sunday. He went over to call on the widdy Sunday, and warn't

hum till twelve. I never took no notice o' it. I was a maturin, o' a plan tu save him.

Arter tea I told Eveliny what 'twas, and got her tu help me. Jonathan is an amazin' heavy sleeper when he gets a goin'—snores like a steam injin—and so I warn't afeared o' wakin' him. I went intu his room and I got out o' the chest o' drawers and places every livin' article o' rayment the deluded critter had tu his back—his shoes, and butes, and everything, only jest his dressin'-gownd—and I packs 'em in a crockery crate, and me and Eveliny takes it and puts it down cellar, and piles things ontu it and fixes it so't no mortal could diskiver it, and then we retired tu our peaceful slumbers, rectified by the knowledge how't we'd saved a human bein' from the snares o' wickedness.

Didn't wake up until broad daylight, and then 'twas with the awfullest yellin'. I went out, and there was Jonathan intu his dressin'-gownd and gray worsted stockin's, and sez he:

"I've been robbed, Charity; I hain't a rag! Oh, murderation, what shall I du? Holler thieves! holler fire! Go and catch 'em! Murder! help! Oh, Jehoshaphat!"

Sez I, cool as a cucumber, "'Tis onfortunate, on this here pertickler occasion."

Sez he, "Oh, du you know where they be?"

"Where you won't find 'em," sez I.

"Oh," sez he, "have mercy," sez he. "Tell me where they be," sez he. "They're tu be tu church tu ten."

"Ah!" sez I.

"Oh," sez he, "I'll present ye with the elegantest o' gowld

watches, and two silk gownds, and a bunnit; only tell me where the weddin' suit is!"

"Thank ye," sez I, "I kin afford tu dress myself."

Sez he, "I'll pay you anything you ask. Jest say what you'll take."

Sez I, "My own way, Jonathan, without thankin' you. I said you shouldn't be married tu that widder."

Sez he, "I'll go *so*."

Sez I, "Ef you like."

Then he went onter his knees and begged o' me.

Sez I, "I'm only thinkin' o' yer own good. I ain't tu be moved, no more'n the old hoss chestnut yonder."

Then he went tarin' round, huntin'. But o' course he couldn't find 'em. I never seen nobody in such a rage. Old fools is the wust fools.

Eveliny shet herself up in the garret, so's not tu see him, and I was tremblin' fur fear somebody would come tu the door, but nobody didn't.

Ten o'clock come, and Jonathan did start in his dressin'-gownd, but he only went as fur as the gate.

We hed an awful time, but, thanks tu marsy, nobody didn't come a near us, and when tea time come I felt safe.

"Run over tu the widdy's," said I tu Eveliny, "and peek in and find out what has become o' the critter."

The gal went.

When she come back, sez she:

"Miss Moriarty is intu highstrikes, and her uncle is usin' o'

profane langwidge, and threatenin' tu murder Mr. Grinder, and the minister hes gone ten mile tu preach a funeral."

"All safe," sez I. "We kin let the deluded critter hev his things."

So we fetched 'em up. Never heerd him swear afore. Shows what widders influences is.

Well, he was jest gettin' intu somethings when there was a banging at the front door. I opens it, and in comes the widder's uncle with a horsewhip intu his hand, and sez he:

"Where's Mr. Grinder?"

"Up stairs," sez I.

"Is he ill—dangerously ill?" sez he.

"Never better as tu health," sez I.

Jonathan hears the voice and down he comes.

"Sir," sez the uncle, "what do you mean by this here infamous conduct?" sez he. "You are no gentleman," sez he. "Explain," sez he.

Sez Jonathan, "'Twarn't my fault, colonel. I swan tu man 'twarn't my fault. I—I couldn't find my butes and things."

The colonel he didn't wait for no more.

"Couldn't find your butes, hey?" sez he. "*Feel* mine," sez he.

And he gin Jonathan a hist, and then begun a floggin' o' him.

Me and Eveliny held ontu his coat tails, but 'twas like holdin' ontu them of an elephant. He jist set us spinnin' as ef we hadn't no more heft than a fly, and before we marched away we

was all lyin' fur dead in the hall. Jonathan, groanin', I was in highstrikes, and Eveliny in spasms.

I staid up tu Peekskill until Wednesday. Then I come down agin tu York tu finish my visitin'; but afore I left the widdy had constituted a case o' breach o' promise o' marriage agin Jonathan, and every lady said she'd get the verdick.

So there hain't no danger o' her now, and I reckon Jonathan won't think o' marryin' fur a spell yet, so I'm here. My things is comin' up by a boy, and I'm goin' tu stay a week. How's the family, and how are you? And don't hurry yourself—but these events has so conglomerated my nerves that I feel obligated tu ask ye how soon ye're goin' tu hev dinner.

NUMBER NINETEEN.

MISS GRINDER EATS HER PECK OF DIRT.

Don't say nuthin', Emma Jane. I've been hevin' the awfullest time. Wish tu marcy I hadn't never left Peekskill. York folks is the dirtiest critters born, and them Peelers is the nastiest o' the bilin'. Talk about your peck o' dirt. I've had it in one mess. Augh! It riles me tu think on't. Du give me suthin' to settle me. Augh!

Never, no never, so long as I'm a livin' sinner, will I go to see Volumny Peeler. It's as much as a body's life's worth. You wouldn't think it tu look at the house, fur they take great airs. The heft o' the dirt's down kitchen. I went down there once, and found the help a polishin' the tumblers with her apron, and warn't anxious to go agin. I begun to suspect then what I found out arterwards, fur I ain't told you the worst by a good deal.

Volumny is quite young, and so's her pardner. They've got a couple o' children, and two aunts o' his'n live with 'em. One is a dredful fleshy old lady. T'other thin as a rail. The fleshy one is Aunt Partheny; she's got suthin' the matter with her feet. Some days she can't only wear Mr. Peeler's slippers. And the

thin one is Aunt Mirandy; she's got a glass eye. As a gineral thing, she don't wear it only when she's dressed fur company.

Both on 'em is intilectable. Miss Partheny goes in fur wimmin's rights; and Miss Mirandy write's fur the "Youth's Adviser."

They hev a way o' turnin' up their noses at other folks, and I can't say I took a notion tu 'em. But Volumny was head o' the house, and she was quite a sociable critter, besides adorin' me. As fur Mr. Peeler, he's a temprancer; won't hev no spiritual lickers drunk under his ruff, and considers beer a pisen. Poor Volumny can't even put no brandy in her mince meat.

Now, as a beveridge, I never touch nuthin'; but I'm obliged tu keep myself from sinkin', now and then, by a little as a medicine. Water floats on my stummick—so I ain't tu be blamed. And after I'd been in Volumny's quite a spell I begun to feel kinder faintish.

Thinks me—this here teetotal talk ain't mebbe jest what it sounds. I know I've smelt sumthin' in Miss Partheny's room, and I ain't Charity Grinder ef I don't find out what it is. I always was a cute one, and secrets ain't tu be kept from me.

If Peeler is a temprancer, Partheny isn't.

That was about seven o'clock Sunday evenin'. It come intu my head like a streak o' lightenin', and I jest took off the bunnit I was puttin' on tu go tu church.

"I've got rather of a headache," sez I, "and think I'll stay tu hum, ef you'll excuse me, Partheny?"

"Oh, certainly," sez she. "I suppose you'll find suthin' tu amuse you?"

"Thank ye," sez I, "I shall."

And I meant tu.

The hull o' 'em went, gal and all, Mr. and Miss Peeler, tu the Baptists' meetin', and the old ladies to a pecooliar kind o' a meetin' 'us, where they don't approve o' one person preachin', but all speak in turns.

So the house was shut up with only me and the cat, and I begun tu look intu things. Purty soon I found what I wanted. There was a bottle in Partheny's closet, and in the bottle there was whisky. I felt awful faint that night, so I made myself a glass and went tu bed—tickled tu think how I'd found out the old critter.

Arter that, whenever I felt faint, and knowd Partheny was out o' the way, I nat'rally helped myself.

About a week from then it blew up awful cold, and I caught a influenzy.

There ain't nuthin' fur the influenzy like toddy; so, while the family was down stairs at tea-time, I made some kind o' an excuse and got away. 'Twas quite dark, and there warn't no glass in my room, but I found one, half full o' water, in Miss Miranda's, and jest managed to get a drop o' spirits out o' Partheny's bottle and back to my own room before I heard the old ladies comin' up.

Seein' I had a cold, I mixed more'n usual and swallered it down. Land o' Goshen, how skeered I was! There was suth-

in' in the glass as hard as a bone, and I come near chokin' tu death with it. I was black in the face, I know, but I wouldn't holler fur fear o' bein' found out. It went down at last, and I came out o' my room, and was goin' down stairs, when I heard Miss Mirandy jawin' away tu the gal:

"You hev," sez she.

"I hain't," sez the gal.

"I left it here," sez she.

"I hain't seen it," sez the gal.

"What's the matter?" sez I.

Sez she, "I've lost my glass eye. I allus put it in a tumbler o' water on the table, and there it was an hour ago. She's moved it."

I begun to turn sick.

"This here table?" sez I.

"Jest here," sez she.

And that was the place I'd got my glass from; and I knowed as well as I know now, I'd swallowed Miss Mirandy's glass eye.

"Oh!" sez I.

Sez she, "What's the matter?"

"I'm kinder faintish," sez I.

And out I goes. Miss Partheny's door was open, and I run in.

"Excuse me," sez I, "but I turned so sick I hev tu sit down."

She sat me a cheer, and sez she:

"Excuse my continuing fur tu do this."

Sez I, "Sartainly."

And then I saw she was a bathin' her feet. She had a basin and she had a bottle. It was the bottle I had diskivered, a kind o' flat one.

Sez she, "I'm ordered fur tu bathe 'em in whisky."

"Oh," sez I.

"Yes," sez she.

"It must come expensive," sez I.

"Not very," sez she.

I jest watched her. There was a tin funnel on the table, and I wondered what that was for. I didn't wonder long; for oh, Emma Jane! when that nasty critter had bathed her feet, and wiped 'em, and put on her shoes and stockins, she jest took the funnel and put it in the bottle, and pitched the whisky through it agin.

I screeched out.

She laughed.

Sez I, "What air you doin', for the love o' goodness?"

Sez she, "I allers du it for tu save."

"Allers?" sez I.

"Until it's tu dirty," sez she.

"How often hev you changed this?" sez I.

"Well," sez she, "about ten times, I guess."

I got up and tried to go, but 'twas tu dreadful. I keeled over, and gin myself up to spasms.

She screeched and fetched the rest, and somehow in my agony o' terror I let the hull out. I got the essense o' Miss Partheny's

feet and Miss Mirandy's eye in me both together, and I didn't keer fur nuthin' else jest then.

Well, I called 'em dirty critters, and they answered back. And Volumny took their parts, and Peeler begun a temprance lectur, and the very next mornin' I cum away; and here I am. Shouldn't wonder ef I died, though I'm goin' to take sassafrax by the gallon, tu try tu git the eye and them feet out o' my blud, where I'm sure they've gone.

NUMBER TWENTY.

CHARITY GOES A MAYING.

You mustn't think hard o' me, Penelopy Jane, fur not hevin' bin here before. I've bin helpin' Mandy and her par tu move, or I should a bin——

Don't you know 'em? Lor! why they're fust chop for gentility. He's one o' the fust o' Intelligence Office Keeper's, and Mandy's ma's pa was a gentleman boss butcher.

Miss Floger would ha' bin Mrs. Floger ef he'd a thought 'twas any use tu step up tu me. He knowed 'twarn't, though; 'twas purty well knowed in Peekskill how't I hadn't no great o' an opinion o' the men sect.

"Well, *she's* gone, and Amandy is purty well growed up. Takes arter her pa, and ain't a mite good-lookin', nuther. She ain't no gret o' a housekeeper; sweeps up behind the grate-pans and tucks rubbish inter the pantrys, and the help is nat rally them he can't git rid of tu the Intelligence Office, and don't turn out partic'larly well. They hev one a week, and while I was there the fust got tipsy and was blowed up along of a kerosene lamp, and the second walked off in Mandy's bunnit, and the third was sich a dirty critter that the wonder is mushrooms didn't

grow in the dirt on the kitching table. 'Twas thick enough, goodness knows, and the place was damp enough. 'Twas the damp decided 'em to move a fust o' May.

"'Movin' is a terrible job, Miss Grinder," sez he; "'specially when there ain't nobody o' experience tu manage the goin's on."

"Lor!" sez I, "it must be," sez I. "But don't you fidget, Mr. Floger; I'll stay and help."

He looked at me with the most touchin' expression o' gratitude, and sez he:

"Miss Grinder, I shall be deeply thankful."

Ollers was a polite man from his youth.

So I staid; and it's well I did. Dunno what on airth that poor critter would a done ef I hadn't, for Mandy ain't no more use than a tree-toad.

They tried fur to get in before the fust o' May, but the family that was a goin' out, where they was goin', didn't want to go, and insisted how't they wouldn't budge until twelve o'clock May day. When Mr. Floger heard that he jest tugged at his hair—hain't none too much, neither—and sez he:

"Desperation!"

"Why, what's the matter?" sez I.

Sez he, "Ever moved in New York on May day?"

"No," sez I.

"Wait and see," sez he. "Wait and see! Ah, ha!"

"Du tell," sez I. "What on airth?"

Sez he, "It ollers rains."

Sez I, "The almanac sez 'Sot fair.'"

"No matter," sez he, "it will. Next place the carters charge you double, and don't come when they promise, at that. You get mixed up with folks comin' in and the folks goin' out get mixed up with you, and the heft o' the things is smashed, and what ain't smashed is lost, and you don't hev nothin' tu eat, and you hev tu sleep up chimbly on a mattress, and you can't find soap or towels, or toothbrushes, and you can't get to rights until you've had whitewash people and scrubbing people to make the place sloppy, and the carpets won't fit, and there's no room for the bedstead."

Then he kinder groaned and stopped.

Sez I, "Things sha'n't be so this time."

Sez he, "Bless you ef they ain't, but I don't believe it."

Poor man! I felt tu pity him. How he needs a wife. It's his bounden duty fur to espunge some competent person o' experience fur to direct his household.

Amandy, I must say, ain't like her pa. She don't appreciate me. She ain't as much obleeged fur my endeavors to sot things right as she'd orter. But I allude it to her ignorance, and pity her. I staid, though she as much as told me there warn't no need until the fust come.

We'd packed a'most everything, and we'd cleared out the basement fur the Jones folks, poor critters. They was movin' where we was quittin', because Mr. Jones hadn't only a thousand a year, and the landlord had riz their rent tu two thousand.

Never felt so sorry fur nobody as I did fur her. I took lunch with her. Her brother was a sea cappen, and she had lots o'

nice furrin things in jars, and quite kep her sperrits up, poor thing, tellin' her how damp the house was, and what a bad neighborhood 'twas, and cetery.

By the time I was through our carts had come, and I run up stairs.

"Now, Mandy," sez I, "you cut round tu the new house and be there to receive the things."

"Well," sez she, "sence you've took matters in hand I s'pose I might as well."

Critter was as mad as hop, though.

Off she went, and me and Mr. Floger staid.

The cartmen was mostly Irish, and the way o' movin' was tu wedge tables and things tight intu doorways and then holler that they wouldn't go through, and then Mr. Floger had tu go tu work and argy that what had went in would go out.

At last sez he, "I must help 'em," and off he peels his coats, and hangs 'em on a nail, and sez he:

"Be keerful o' them coats, Miss Grinder."

"O' course," sez I; and I kep an eye on 'em."

Purty soon one load was on, and off he went with it, carryin' a clock, and perched up in front in his shirt sleeves.

I hollered tu him, but he didn't hear, and I sot down on a feather bed tu wait until the carts came back.

Land o' liberty, how tejus it was!

Wall, I hadn't sot there long, when I seen a man gettin' over the balcony rails. He was a young feller, with a head o' black hair close tu his head, as ef it had been chawed down by some

old cow, and at fust I didn't like his looks. But when I hollered out, "What du you want?" sez he, "The gentleman that's jest gone off sent me."

"Oh," sez I. "Who be you!"

"The confidential help," sez he.

"Hey?" sez I.

Sez he, "Mebbe you're a stranger in York?"

"I be," sez I.

"Well," sez he, "you know, mum, cartmen is so dishonest that 'tain't safe tu trust the wallyables tu 'em, so them that is prudent employs us. We're warranted honest by the Tract Society, and is all highly respectable young men."

"How looks will deceive!" sez I.

"Yes'm," sez he.

"So Mr. Floger sent you?" sez I.

"Yes'm," sez he. "Mr. Floger said fur you tu send everything wallyable by me."

"Well," sez I, "there's the pianner."

"Oh," sez he, "yes'm; but you see I mean small things. I'd be glad enough," sez he, "tu take the pianner, only I ain't hed the strength bestowed on me. I think," sez he, "the gentleman mentioned *silver*."

"Yes," sez I, and I fetches a basket. "The forks, and spoons, and cake-basket, and teapot is here. Don't joggle 'em to scratch 'em. I'll put this here photography album intu it, tu," sez I; "and there's a lot o' damask napkins. Kin you carry any more?"

"Yes'm," sez he.

"Then here's the mantelry ornamentations," sez I. "They cost a lot, so be keerful. And I tell you what yu du—jest take these coats on your arm, and tell Mr. Floger to put 'em on. The dear man will catch his death in his shirt sleeves.

He took the coats.

"I'm afeered you'll find them things heavy," sez I.

"No'm," sez he; "and ef they air, I'm thankful tu exert my strength. I wish," sez he, "I could take the hull that's here —I du, indeed."

Off he went, and I sot down agin tu think what an excellent young man he must be, and while I was thinkin' back comes the carts—Mr. Floger on one o' em in his shirt sleeves yet. He comes into the room, and sez he:

"I'm chilled tu death. Shouldn't wonder ef I'd hev fever an' ager. Where's my coats?"

"Land o' liberty!" sez I, "you've passed the help. I sent 'em by him."

"What help?" sez he.

"The confidential help recommended by the Tract Society," sez I.

He sot down, and sez he:

"Who sent him, Mandy?"

"He said *you* did," sez I. "I've giv him the silver, and manteltry ornaments, and your coats, and two dozen o' damask napkins. So I hope it's all right."

"Yes," sez he, "all right—quite right. Only what I expected—you've gin 'em tu a thief."

I went intu highstrikes.

My feelin's was past description; but Amandy Floger actually said how't ef I hadn't bothered round it wouldn't a happened. She said, tu, how't the bottom o' the barril I'd packed the best chany in comin' out and smashin' everything tu flinder, was my fault, and attributed the handles o' the fryin'-pan goin' through the eye o' Miss Floger—her pictur, I mean—tu me.

'Twarn't pleasant tu see her exhibit such an unchristian temper, so I left until they got cleaned up, and was heving reg'lar dinners agin.

I shall go tu see 'em, however, agin, for though Amandy is a disagreeable, sot up piece, I highly respect her pa. He'd orter unite himself with a second pardener o' the highest respectabillatude and economy, that would see tu things fur him; don't you think so, Penelopy Jane? The only objection I hev tu goin' there is, that he's a widdiwer, and folks o' narrer minds might say I wanted fur tu catch him.

Folks that knows me through, knows the way I've always regarded the men sect, and that I'm above it. Guess so.

Jest a cup o' tea, and some muffins, and jelly. Don't put yourself out fur me, Penelopy.

NUMBER TWENTY-ONE.

CHARITY BECOMES A VICTIM.

Eveliny Buckstaver, what I fetched up, and rectified her manners and her morals myself—that I thought was the moralest young woman I knowed. Eveliny Buckstaver, that went and warned me o' the doin's o' the Widder Moriarty. She that helped me to discomfiscate the snares o' a designin' female, and has said, a dozen times and more: "Oh, Miss Grinder, how any female o' common sense kin unite herself tu a member o' the men sect, I can't diskiver." She that's said them words as ef she meant 'em. Why, it's enough tu make any indiwiddle's hair stand on eend. Mine riz up like wires when I fust knowed it.

Last Saturday, while I was a-settin' in Mirandy's parlor, there come a knock at the door, and the help comes in, and sez she:

"There's a person tu the door wants tu see Miss Grinder, by the name o' Eveliny Buckstaver."

"Lor!" sez I. "Eveliny! Well, show her in."

In she comes and I shakes hands. (Oh, the nasty, yaller, scrawny critter, how she deceived me!) And sez she:

"How are ye, Miss Grinder?"

"Tu be crawlin'," sez I. "What fetches *you* down?"

"Oh!" sez she, "nuthin' much. I axed Mr. Jonathan ef I mout come. Thought, seein' you was tu York, you'd go a shoppin' with me. York-boughten things is considerable superior tu them tu Peekskill."

"Sartinly, I will," sez I; "and what you'd do in this awful city I dunno ef you hadn't a pusson o' experience tu show you its perils. Yes, Eveliny, I'll shop with you."

So I did.

"How's Jonathan?" sez I, when we was out on the street.

Sez she, "Purty middlin'."

"Is he dejected consarnin' the widdy?" sez I.

"Oh, Lor', no!" sez she. "'Twarn't only skin-deep."

"Does she come arter him?" sez I.

"Not she," sez Eveliny.

"I heerd she'd got the case," sez I.

"So she has," says Eveliny. "But she won't get him."

Then we both larfed, fit tu kill ourselves.

"What air you goin' tu buy?" sez I.

"Well," sez she, "a gown, and a shawl, and a bunnit, and fixin's. I've got a lot o' savin's."

And jest as she said that, we cum to a store.

It was one o' them big places in Broadway, and I walks up tu one o' them young men, and sez I:

"See here, mister. I've fetched you a new customer. Here's Eveliny Buckstaver, my help, that I fetched up, and she's goin' tu buy a heap."

He grins, and sez he:

"What would you like tu see?"

"A silk," sez Eveliny.

"Lor'," sez I, "goin' tu make a splurge!"

Sez she, "I'd ortu hev a silk."

"Wall," sez I, "p'raps so."

The young man sez?, "A black?"

"No," sez she; "that's too old-womanish."

He fotches out a blue, and a red, and a pink, and then a yaller, and a brown. He said the brown was a "queer" color. thought so tu.

"But," sez Eveliny, sez she, "I want suthin' lighter."

Out he fetches some more, and she pitches on a kind of a pearl.

"Why," sez I, "sho, you ain't goin' tu get *that?* Hain't no wear intu it. You'll hev it dyed in six months."

Sez she, "I sha'n't wear it often."

"Wall," sez I, "fling your money in the street, ef you like. 'Tain't my advice."

Well, she bought the dress, and the linin', and the buttons, and, sez she, "I'll see a shawl."

When the young man heard that, he sent us up stairs, and ef Eveliny didn't buy a *white* shawl.

"You air crazy," sez I.

"Oh, no I ain't," sez she.

"You'll look like a bride," sez I.

"Oh, get out!" sez she.

"You will," sez I.

"So long as I ain't, I don't care," sez she.

Well, then she bought gloves the color o' her dress, and, afterward, a white bunnit. Perfectly ridiculous for a help; but she only laughed when I said so.

I felt as mad as a meat-ax, and we were goin' to where she was a stoppin'—she larfin and me a givin' it to her well—when I comes bump agin somebody, and, land o' liberty, 'twas Jonathan.

"Why!" sez I.

"'Tain't you," sez he. "Wall, Eveliny!"

She grins.

"She's ashamed o' herself. Been a wastin' o' her Money," sez I. "What she's bought is fit for a bride."

Sez he, "She'll hev tu be one, and wear 'em, then."

Sez I, "I hope she knows better."

Sez he, "Them's your idees."

"Yes," sez I.

"Oh!" sez he. "Wall, now, ain't you hungry?"

"Yes," sez I.

And he walked us into the shiniest place I ever saw, and treated us tu a dinner. Never saw him so good-natured.

Before he was through, sez he:

"Charity."

"Yes," sez I.

"I don't owe you no grudge about the widdy," sez he.

"Hope not," sez I. "You'd orter be thankful."

"Wall," sez he, "*she*——"

Eveliny she larfed.

Sez he, "I was mistook. I didn't care much for her."

"Well," sez I, "I knowed it."

Then he and Eveliny both larfed hearty.

Thinks me, "It's only goin' tu prove how changeable the men sect is. He adored the widdy once," but he didn't say nothin'.

Arter a while Eveliny said she was anxious to go, and they left me tu Mirandy's, and went away tu take her bundles tu her cousin's, where she was a stoppin'.

I didn't see nothin' of her for a few days, but Jonathan called in the evenin' twice.

Before the most horrid o' calamities folks is ginerally carm. I didn't expect nothin'. I slept and took my reg'lar meals like a innocent lamb before it's slaughtered.

Sabberday, a young gal that's sewin' for Mirandy, come intu my room tu ax me tu lace her stays.

Sez she, "I'm goin' tu our church, to-day—there's to be a weddin'."

"Goodness!" sez I. "I'll go tu, then."

Sez she, "Du, Miss Grinder, weddin's is so sweet."

"They air warnin's," sez I. "I go as a matter o' duty."

"Oh!" sez she, and grins.

I was mad enough to box her ears; but they're all alike, the hull of 'em. We took a car and went. We wasn't very early, and the church was full, so't we had to take a back seat.

"Can't see much o' the bride," sez I.

"No," sez she.

How provokin'.

Well, the church kept fillin' up, and when the weddin' party came, I couldn't see nuthin' of 'em, but a kind o' a shine of white.

"Is she pretty?" sez I, tu the young woman. She was taller than me.

"No," sez she.

"And him?"

"As humbly as a stone fence."

The service was goin' on, and I listened.

The minister axed everybody that had anything fur tu say agin the union fur tu speak, or ever after hold their tongues. Then he went on a marryin' of 'em.

Sez he, "Will you, Eveliny, take this man fur tu be your wedded husband?" and the rest on't.

"Lor'," sez I, "I know a voung woman by the name o' Eveliny, and I larfed.

Pretty soon he was talkin' tu the man.

Sez he, "Will you, Jonathan, take this woman fur to be your wedded wife?"

"Lor'," sez I, "my brother is named Jonathan. How curious!"

"Yes," sez she.

And the minister went on and finished.

Then sez she:

"Hurry out, and stand on the payment, and we'll see 'em get into the carriage."

So we went, and stood.

Purty soon out they comes. I stares and stares, and then I begins tu clasp my hands.

"Oh, 'tain't," sez I.

"What?" sez she.

"Arter all my bringin' up," sez I.

"What is it?" sez she.

"Oh!" sez I, "oh!"

"What is the matter?" sez she.

"It is," sez I, "the awful truth sinkin' intu my mind. It is my brother, Jonathan Grinder, and our help, Eveliny Buckstaver."

"Du tell!" sez she.

"Stop 'em," sez I. "Tell the minister I won't have it."

"He said fur you tu speak then, or ever arter hold your tongue," sez she.

So he had, and I'd kept my head shut, and the time was past.

"Come with me," sez I, and the young gal went.

We got tu the cousin's house in about ten minutes, and found 'em all at dinner. In I goes, and before 'em I stands like a sperit.

"Wretches!" sez I. "Behold her you hev betrayed!"

"Land o' liberty!" sez the cousin "Is it his fust wife? Scratch his eyes out! Oh, the fiend!"

Sez Eveliny, "It ain't nobody but Miss Charity."

"Oh," sez I, "don't speak tu me. This here is your opinion o' the men sect, is it? aidin' and abettin' my brother in his iniquity."

Sez she, "We're both o' age."

"Reckon you air," sez I.

Sez she, "This here disturbance at a weddin' ain't respectable, Miss Grinder."

"Ain't it," sez I. "Is it respectable fur tu act like a wolf in a sheepfold, and marry my brother while I was as you supposed —out o' hearin'? You, that pretended to be my friend, and that I fetched up and made a help of?"

"Oh," sez she, "I've allus felt tu pity Mr. Grinder, and knowed he was treated dreadful."

"By who?" sez I.

"By *you*," sez she. "Old maids is allus tyrants."

"Let me get at her," sez I. And I flowed, but Jonathan catches me.

"You sha'n't tech her," sez he; "she's my wife. I've promised fur tu pertect her, and I will. Ef you'll set down and dine, well and good; ef not, you'd better go."

"I'll go," sez I. "I'll go; but I'll hev vengeance."

"Very well," sez he. "You can't stop me now, you know; so go ahead."

I did. I hev a sperit still. The worm turned. I went up to Peekskill that night. I got intu the house. I smashed all the chany, and tore off all the wall paper, and cracked the looking-glass, and rubbed lime intu the front parlor carpet, and I

whitewashed the mahogany furniture, and pulled up the flowers in the garden, until there was a satisfaction in reflectin' that no bride ever went hum to sech a house; and that I'd given her work for a month, and him expenses tu match. Then I writ in charcoal on the hall wall: "Miss Charity Grinder's compliments," and took my things and came away. I shall live in York fur good, and never speak to either of 'em while I live.

NUMBER TWENTY-TWO.

MISS GRINDER DETECTS AN ATROCIOUS PLOT.

He wore his hair dreadful long, and had a hat with a slopin' crown, and a cord and tussel, and his collar was wide open. Ef I'd a hed seech a humbly throat, I'd hev buttoned it close; and he hed a black mustache, and was altogether the awfullest-lookin' critter ever I see.

"Keturah," sez I—I was stoppin' a spell tu Keturah Kalsomine's; she's separated from her pardner, and earns a livin' keepin' genteel boarders—"Keturah, don't you take him."

"Lor'," sez she. "Why not, Charity?"

Sez I, "I misdoubt him."

Sez she, "He's a very interestin' young man, *I* think. Besides," sez she, "he's offered fur to pay in advance."

"Well," sez I, "you air your own mistress, Keturah; but as fur *me*, I'd sooner sleep under the ruff with a cannibal."

Sez she, "What on airth has given you such a pecooliar opinion o' Mr. Chalker?"

"Well," sez I, "I'm partially prejudiced by his wearin' his hair like a gorilla, and partially by his hevin' no buttons tu his collar."

"Well," sez she, "I *don't* admire his hair, but the Rev. Cataline Crump, that came back frum a mission tu the heathens, *he* wore his'n so, and the collar is the identical image o' Lord Byron's."

Sez I, "Probably there was excuses fur the Reverend Mister Cataline Crump. When you live at Rome you must du as the Romans du, and prob'ly that was the fashion amongst the heathens; but *don't*, for goodness' sake, mention Lord Byron before *me*. I consider how't 'tain't proper fur a lady even tu hear his name. Shouldn't wonder ef that new boarder o yourn *was* like Lord Byron in more things than his collar."

She larfed, and sure enough my words didn't make no impression onto her mind, and that young man was admitted beneath her ruff. I knowed then suthin' dretful would come on't. I wouldn't a gone tu sleep with the door o' my room unlocked fur no money.

Besides his hair and his collar, Mr. Chalker was pecooliar in other things. He had a habit of groanin' and another habit o' sithin. He used tu sit up until the awfulest late hours, burnin' the gas, full head, as poor Keturah said, without remorse; and often and often, I know fur sartin how't he didn't go tu bed at all until he'd hed his breakfast.

Another thing he was perdicted tu was smoke. I never knew a chimney as bad as him in them respects; but then I must say this o' the present gineration o' young men, you can tell when the heft o' 'em is comin', fust by a smell o' stale tobaccer, and then by a smell o' stale gin, and pertickerlerly by a train o' little

puddles where they've bin a spittin'. Mr. Chalker warn't much worse than the rest, only he kep' it up later.

What he did fur a livin' I couldn't tell. I warn't curus about it, but in the cause o' respectabilitude I consider it a Christian duty fur tu find out who folks be.

On Tuesday evenin' I retired at a unusually early hour. 'Twarn't without a motive.

At that hour Mr. Chalker went out for a walk, reg'lar, staid about an hour, and then come back. His room was opposite mine, and my key opened his door. Ef 'twas possible tu diskiver what he was, I meant tu du it.

Nat'rally seein' how't this was my intention, I didn't undress. I jist slipped on my purple calico double gown, and a nightcap, and when I heerd him go out, run across and in.

The room was upside down, and smelt o' smoke, and there was four bottles on the manteltry. But things was locked up, with the exception o' his trunk. I looked intu that. He hadn't no shirts but two flannel ones; but he had a lot o' paper buzzums, and collars, and cuffs. He was forehand for neck-ties, tew, and I was jest tryin' tu see what was in a paper passel, when, land o' liberty! I heerd the lock turn, and in a minnit I knowed he'd returned. There warn't nuthin' left for me but tu slip intu a pantry, and blow my light out. The next minnit in he walks, along with another person of the men sect. My heart palpitationed with the knowledge o' how indelicately I was sittiwated, and ef it hadn't a been for fear o' bein' heerd, I should hev considered it my duty for tu hev had highstrikes.

The other gentleman was very stout, and wore his head a'most shaved, as near as I could see.

Mr. Chalker sot a cheer, and sez he, "Be seated, sir."

"Thank ye," sez the other.

"Shall I light the gas?" sez Mr. Chalker.

"No," sez the other. "I prefer such conversation as we're about to hev to be had in the twilight. You can think better—eh?"

Then Mr. Chalker poured out suthin', and they both drank, and then they lit a couple o' cigars and smoked. Then sez the visitor:

"See here, Chalker, I dunno as you'll thank me for sayin' so, but I don't like your plot."

"What's the matter with it?" sez Mr. Chalker.

"There ain't enough action intu it," sez the other. "There's talkin' and no dewin'."

I folds my hands and rolls up my eyes, and thinks me, "Air I the instrument for tu be used intu the detection o' a *plot*?"

Then I listened.

"Well," sez Mr. Chalker, "I dunno. I've broke off Eveliny's marriage, and kidnapped her sweetheart and sent him to sea, and I've forged a letter tellin' her how't he's unfaithful, and she's goin' to marry Black Dungarry."

"And the hull o' this time I hain't nuthin' to do," sez the other wretch.

"The risin' moon discloses you a waitin' in the woods fur to

murder the old grandfather, for tu obtain his will," sez Mr. Chalker. "That's what I call a strikin' p'int."

I groaned in sperit, but I didn't durse to groan aloud, and I went on listenin'.

The other ruffian sez sez he:

"Do you suppose 'twould be likely fur him to carry the will intu his pocket in the woods? No," sez he. "Tell you what —I'll conceal myself in the old gentleman's room. He's pious, ain't he? Well, I'll be behind the curtain and he'll come in. Of course, he'll take out his will and talk about it; then he'll kneel down fur to pray. There'll be a dim light intu the room, and I'll start forward to slow music with my knife lifted—don't you see? He turns, says 'Ha!' and I plunge it into his heart —eh?"

"Very good," sez Mr. Chalker.

"Oh, the wretches!" sez I.

"Then, you see, I obtain the property," sez the wretch, "and there ain't nothin' left but to pison Carlos and stab his brother."

"Very well," sez Mr. Chalker; "but Tompkins must carry off Eveliny on her wedding-night. I can't alter that. You've got plenty to do *now*, surely."

"I should think he *had*," sez I. "Oh, land o' liberty! ef I ever get safe out o' here it'll be a miracle. The critters will murder me fur hearin' of their plot if they diskiver me. What shill I du?—what shill I du?"

I felt the hull horror of my sittyation rush upon me, and I kinder groaned.

"Hullo!" sez the other wretch.

"What's that?" sez Mr. Chalker.

"A ghost in the cellerage," sez the fust.

I made sure o' being diskivered, and I groaned again.

"Can't find a match," sez Mr. Chalker.

Then he runs out intu the hall and hollers "Biddy."

And my presence o' mind come to my aid, and I slipped past 'em in the dark, and across the entry intu my own room. There I locked myself in and went to bed, with four gas-jets burnin', and a hammer in my right hand, and my numberill in my left. I heerd 'em tellin' how't a burglar was concealed intu their room, and had slipped out, and I thanked fortune nobody knew 'twas me. Then I begun tu reflect how it was my duty tu act; finally I decided, and sez I, "I'll du it at any price. Charity Grinder, nerve yourself," sez I, "and be brave."

I waited until the house was quiet, and then I riz up and put on my double gownd and slipped intu Keturah's room. She was snorin' dreadful, and so was her three young 'uns.

Boardin'-housekeepers is ginerally crowded, but I warn't prepared fur tu find the hull family sleepin' with their ma.

I leans over and shakes her, and sez I:

"Keturah."

"Well," sez she, "it ain't mornin'."

"No," sez I, "it's the solemn hour o' half-past one. I've got a dreadful disclosure fur tu make."

She kinder shrieks, and sot up, and sez she :

"Oh, what has happened?"

Sez I, "Don't say nothin', Keturah. Come intu my room and I'll tell ye."

She comes, white as a spook, and all shakin'.

"Oh!" sez she, "oh, du speak, quick!"

Sez I, "I was right about Mr. Chalker."

"Hey?" sez she.

Sez I, "Accident has throwed me in a sittywation fur tu hear a conversation betwixt him and another wicked critter. I've overheerd a plot."

"A plot in a respectable boardin'-house?" sez she.

Sez I, "Yes, Keturah. Du you know anybody o' the name o' Eveliny that's engaged tu a young man?"

Sez she, "Yes. There's Miss Perkins, over the way."

Sez I, "Has she a grandpa?"

Sez she, "She keeps house fur him."

Sez I, "It's her."

Sez she, "What's her?"

Sez I, "Mr. Chalker has had the young man she's engaged tu kidnapped and sent tu sea, so's to hev her marry some one else."

"How you talk!" sez she.

"He sez so," sez I; "and, besides, the otner wretch is tu hide in the old gentleman's room, and when he sees him kneel down tu say his prayers, come behind him and murder him. Arter that, they're tu pison and stab a couple more—jest this

minnit I disremember their names—and one on 'em is tu carry off Miss Perkins."

Sez Keturah, sez she, "You must be crazy, Charity; this here can't be so."

Sez I, "Where's the family Bible? I'm willin' tu take my afterdavid on't."

Sez she, "It must be some horrid dream," sez she. "It's a awful thing not to hev nobody o' the men sect tu rely ontu in this here emergency. I think 'twas real mean o' Mr. Kalsomine fur tu run off when he knowed how females was sittiwated alone in the world."

Sez I, "Seein' sich is the case, and us two tugether, I don't think 'twould be unproper for tu rouse up Dr. Bloonder and Mr. Meggs."

"Perhaps not," sez she.

"Come," sez I.

So arter she'd slipped on a mornin' gownd, we went tu Dr. Bloonder's room door.

She knocks, and he cries:

"What's that?"

"Oh!" sez I, "excuse me, Dr. Bloonder. We shouldn't trouble you at the dead o' night ef 'twurn't a case o' life and death."

In a few minnits out he comes, and sez he:

"Who's ill? Who is ill, my dear ladies?"

Sez I, "It's wuss than indispersition o' the body."

"Ah!" sez he.

"Yes," sez I. "Wake Mr. Meggs, please, and jine us in the dinin'-room."

Sez he, "It ain't fire or thieves?"

"You shall hear," sez I. "Be calm, and you shall hear."

So she and me proceeded to the dinin'-room, and they follered.

I closes the door, and turns up the gas, and we sits down. Miss Kalsomine commenced.

Sez she, "Gentlemen, I'm sorry to inform you how't Miss Charity Grinder has diskivered suthin' awful regardin' Mr. Chalker."

"Ah!" sez the doctor.

Sez Mr. Meggs, "I haven't much o' an opinion o' Chalker's morals myself."

Sez Miss Kalsomine, "It's more than you can imagine, Mr. Meggs. Miss Grinder happenin'——"

"Permiscously tu be passin' the door," sez I.

"Yes," sez she. "Overheard him a talkin' tu another man, and connivin' o' a plot. And," sez she—a sobbin' so't I felt tu pity her—"tu think o' livin' respected, and keepin' the best o' tables at the prices things is now, fur tu hev plots connived under my own ruff."

Sez the doctor, "Trewth, Miss Kalsomine, is stranger than fiction."

Sez Mr. Meggs, "We're all attention."

"Well," sez Miss Kalsomine, "Miss Grinder heerd the plot,

as I said. They're goin' first tu kidnap Eveliny Perkins, and send her tu sea."

"No," sez I; "it's her young man."

"That's what I mean," sez she. "And then they're goin' tu come behind the old gentleman, her grandfather, and murder him while he's sayin' his prayers, fur the object o' stealin' his will."

"Gracious heavings, what du I hear?" sez the doctor.

"When is this here atrocious plot to be consummated?" sez Mr. Meggs.

Sez I, "That I didn't hear."

Sez he, "It may be this very night."

"Yes," sez I.

Sez he, "We must warn the Perkinses at once. Some of us must guard the house tu prevent the villain's escape, and others go over to the Perkinses. Meggs, wake up Tompkins, and Brown, and Blossom—will you? We three will go over to Perkins'."

We went. Mr. Perkins came to the door.

"Excuse me," sez I, "fur intrudin' at the solemn hour o' nearly tew, but your lives depends on't."

He begins tu yell "Fire! fire! fire!" at the top of his lungs.

"Hush!" sez the doctor. "'Tisn't fire—it's a plot."

"Oh," sez he. "Come in, du. Excuse my costoom—I didn't expect ladies. I'll be back in a minute."

He went away, and purty soon down came Miss Perkins, in

nightcap and shawl, and Eveliny, with her hair in papers. Then enters Perkins with more on.

Sez the doctor, sez he, "Don't be needlessly alarmed."

"Thank ye," sez Mr. Perkins.

"But," sez the doctor, "this lady is, I believe, betrothed to a young gentleman?"

"Yes," sez her ma.

"Oh!" sez Eveliny. "*Has* anything happened to Jones?"

Sez he, "I hope not, but there is a plot fur to kidnap him and send him to sea. One who calls himself Chalker is the ringleader. Probably, however, that is an alias."

"Oh!" screams Eveliny, "oh! oh!"

"A moment," sez the doctor. "You hev an aged parent under the ruff?"

"Yes," sez Mr. P.

"He's pious?"

"Yes, sir."

"And has made a will?"

"Well, yes—so it's understood," sez Mr. P.

"There's a plot agin him, tu," sez Mr. Meggs.

"Horrors!" sez Mr. Perkins.

"The assassin is to conceal himself in his room, wait until he sez his prayers, and then murder him and take his will," sez Mr. Meggs.

They all shrieked.

"Trewth," sez the doctor agin, "is stranger than fiction.

We owe this here discovery tu the lady next you—Miss Grinder, of Peekskill."

"How can we thank her?" sez Mr. Perkins.

"Bless her forever!" sez Miss P.

"Jones and me is her devoted friends fur life," sez Miss Eveliny. "But, oh! may it not be tu late?"

"Well," sez the doctor. "The ringleader is guarded, and I'd advise gettin' a warrant and havin' him arrested. I'll go with you."

"Thank ye," sez Mr. P.

So they went. Mr. Meggs staid to protect the house, and I went hum with Keturah.

We found Mr. Tompkins guarding the door.

"He slumbers yet," sez he, "little knowing his plot is frustrated."

Then they all complimented me on my discernment, and pitied poor Keturah.

In about an hour some police came over with Mr. Perkins and the doctor, and they woke Mr. Chalker up, arrested him, and walked him off.

To-morrer I'm tu give evidence. I retire with the consciousness o' havin' dun my duty. I wish every one could say the same.

* * * * * * *

Morning—half-past eleven.

What is the use o' doin' your duty? you ain't never appreciated. This here mornin' convinces me o' that.

I went tu court with Keturah, and there I found Mr. Chalker and the other ruffian. They both was grinnin', and the white-headed old gentleman behind a desk was grinnin', tew, and the doctor and Mr. Meggs was lookin' womblecropt, and they turns on me, and sez one:

"Miss Grinder was our authority."

"Yes," sez I. "I'll take my afterdavid."

Sez the old gentleman:

"You will, eh, Miss Grinder?"

"Yes," sez I. "Justice shill have its way."

"It shill," sez he. "Well, now, ma'am, we want your evidence. How did you overhear the conversation between these two gentlemen? Remember, you're on oath."

"Well," sez I, "I was in the pantry. I had suspicions, and I hid there."

"That's what we heard," sez Mr. Chalker.

"Well," sez the old gentleman, "can you repeat the conversation?"

"The sense on't," sez I.

"Well," sez he.

"Fust," sez I, "that ruffian said how't he didn't think Mr. Chalker's plot was terrible enough, and that he wanted more tu do. And then Mr. Chalker said how't Eveliny Perkins young man was tu be kidnapped, and she made tu marry some one else. And then they decided how't one on 'em (that one) was tu hide in Gran'ther Perkins' room, and, when he kneeled down tu say his prayers, murder him, and take his will. 'And then,'

sez he, 'there's nothin' tu do but tu pison Carlos, and stab his brother, and carry off Eveliny on her weddin' night.'"

Sez the old gentleman, "You will swear tu the name of Perkins?"

"Well," sez I—no; I told Miss Kalsomine, and she said who it must be."

I only heard 'em say Eveliny, and talk about her gran'ther.

The hull of 'em laughed, and sez the old gentleman:

"Miss Grinder, you've made a serious mistake. The Eveliny alluded to is the heroine of a play. This gentleman is a dramatic author, and this one a manager and actor, who is to perform the villain of the piece. It is not possible to proceed against you, sir," said the old gentleman, bowing to the other wretch; "though, indeed, the last time I witnessed your performance it was so true to nature that I felt inclined to issue a warrant for your arrest."

Then every one laughed again.

"You can go home," said the old gentleman. "We have no further need of you, Miss Grinder; and pray reassure the Perkins family."

I bridles up, and sez I:

"I trust no one is larfin' at me; and as for you," sez I, "I hev that opinion o' play actors that I hain't a doubt whatever you haven't done, you're bad enough for anything. I don't believe it's a play. I heerd you call it a plot."

Then I pranced away with dignitude.

Me and Keturah had a fallin' out when we got hum, and I left

her with disgust. There ain't no use of bein' a benefactor of the human race—you ain't appreciated. Ef I hed brought tew villains to justice I might a hed a monnyment erected to me in the City Hall Park; but bein' I made a mistake, I only got grinned at. Sich is life. But mark my words: Mr. Chalker will come to be hung yet. Nobody but a villain could wear his hair like a gorilla.

NUMBER TWENTY-THREE.

TWO EPISTLES DROPPED INTO A CORNER LETTER-BOX.

Letter First.

NEW YORK, May 30th, 1866.

DEAR PIETY:—I take up my pen in hand fur tu write you a few lines. Ever sense I came tu York I've intended tu write, but such a place is enough tu skeer all literary ideas from the most intilectable o' minds, and what with the fixes you get intu continnerly, and the thievin' critters and impostures, and the number o' streets, and their distance apart, and the length o' time it takes to go to places, and the number o' cars that run the wrong way that you're sure tu get in, I ain't had time fur nothin'. Besides, I suppose you've heerd o' Jonathan's weddin'. He's united in the matrimonial sittervation o' life tu that critter, whose name I can't mention, even on paper, such is my emotions—she 'twas brought up with principles o' rectitude, and has turned out a viper, and knows how't 'twouldn't be consistent with my principles fur tu live tu Peekskill no longer. I'm purty well off, thank fortune, and kin live where I choose, and jest now I think I'll stay tu York.

I'm tu Amandy Floger's pa's, at present. I was there the fust

of May, and rendered 'em considerable assistance in movin'. Dunno how they could hev got along without me. Mandy is young and don't take that there heartfelt interest in housekeepin' that we o' the age o' approachin' maturity does. Her ma is deceased, you know, and she hain't had no partickerler bringin' up, only what her pa could give her, and men arn't no great hands at fetchin' up o' gals. She's learnt fur tu play the pianny, and sing, and cetery; but what's accomplices tu a elderly man o' middle age? What he wants is a partner o' discretion, that can cook well, and save money. Seein' the late Miss Floger was took he'd orter have purvided himself with another. Time enough yet, though. It's better for tu show judition in sech important affairs. I've allers thought I'd never take the awful step o' selectin' a pardner before I was able to choose one that, to use a poetical expression, would wash and wear.

Wouldn't hev you mention it fur nuthin', Piety, but Mr. Floger is very partickerler in his intentions tu me.

I feel tu be anxious that folks will pass remarks about me and insinnivate how't I want tu catch him; but I can't hurt his feelin's by leavin' when he's so anxious fur me tu prolong my visit, even though Mandy Floger has behaved in a way fur tu occasion me tu blush for her.

I scorn tu listen, but I accidentally overheard her remark tu an aunt o' hern that she "wished the *old* thing would go."

"*Old* thing," meant *me*, Piety. No matter. I don't say nuthin', but I'll remember it. A pretty state o' things it has

arrived at, when a young hity-tity critter calls a lady approachin' the age o' maturity an *old* thing.

If ever I consent fur tu bless Mr. Floger with a return o' his emotions o' a tender natur, Mandy Floger shall be sent tu boardin'-school.

Now, as I sits a writin', I hear him a walkin' up and down his room, and groanin'. He has a interestin' habit o' groanin' when the weekly bills comes in. No wonder, when things is wasted as they be, and Mandy dresses as she does.

At this moment I haven't a doubt, Piety Pratt, how't he is thinkin' tu himself o' your friend and confidential Charity Grinder. If I was his'n economics would be thought of beneath this ruff as they never will be while Mandy Floger is housekeeper. She has three jockeys, two bunnits, and no eend o' dresses, and it's my belief never sifts the cinders nor saves the drippin's. Yesterday, as I handed Mr. Floger the sassages tu breaktwist, I thought o' that, and sithed. He thought on't, tew, I guess, fur he sithed back. Yesterday there was a button off his bosom. I remarked it. I'd like tu hev sewed it on; but you know he might have took the liberty o' kissin' me ef I'd done it, and I'm the patron o' perpriety, and allers hev been. I told Mandy so, and she said, "I needn't be afraid." Piety Pratt, I'd a good mind tu du it straight off, fur tu show her I *had*.

It's only silly critters, Piety, that considers how't airly youth is the time fur sentiments o' a tender nature. As Mr. Floger remarks, "A man never knows the real vally o' a pardner until

he's had the rheumatics. It's trew, Piety, ef one o' the men sect *did* say it.

I suppose, seein' you ain't acquainted with Mr. Floger, you can't understand how my emotions toward the men sect has changed. But ef you knowed him, Piety, you'd understand that there is varieties in everything, and that there air men that, as fur as it is in the nature o' the sect tu be, is near about as good as middlin' nice wimmin—not many, but there air a few, and Mr. Floger is one o' 'em.

He's thinkin' o' purchasin' this house. I quite encourage him in the idee—it's jest tu my mind. As soon as I can with perpriety go ahead in furnishin', I shill have green velvet cheers bought, and a marble-top table fur the parlor. The late Miss Floger, that's hangin' on the wall over the manteltry, will have tu come down and go up attic, I guess, fur I want the place fur my own photography, the size o' life, in a gilt frame, that I calkerlate Mr Floger will hev took in weddin' costoom.

Of course when I allude tu Miss Floger hangin' on the wall I mean her pictur'. You might think Mr. F. was like Bluebeard ef I didn't explain.

She was a very respectable lady I haven't a doubt—ef she hadn't a been Mr. Floger wouldn't hev hed her; but I shouldn't want her starin' in my face perpetooal. Then Mandy should give up the best bedroom, and go in the back attic. Good enough fur a young critter o' seventeen. I don't calkerlate tu keep no help—make her stir round a bit and do her health

good. She sleeps in old kids now, Piety, fur tu keep her hands white.

As fur that aunt o' her'n, I don't calkerlate she shill darken my ruff. She's displayed tew onchristian a sperit fur me tu contaminate myself with her society; besides she'd allers make a patron o' her late sister tu me. It's the natur o' relationships tu du so.

Now, Piety, the minute he asks the question I shall write tu you tu be bride-maid. The last fashion-plate fur a bride in Godey's is tu be my dress. I shill calkerlate on havin' you stay a month, and shill invite Tabby Mouser along with you. I hate the critter like pison, but I've heerd say how't she said "Charity Grinder would never hev a chance tu change her name as long as she lived ef the men sect was o' her opinion," and seein' how hard she's tried and couldn't, I'd like her tu be present at my nuptyals, and see the devotion o' Mr. Floger.

Ef I could I'd give her an invite without mentionin' the occasion, so't she wouldn't get rigged up tu cut a dash, as she will ef she knows.

You and she shall hev the back bedroom, on the second floor. That I shall keep fur spare. Mandy's aunt sha'n't come.

You mustn't tell nobody, but there's one or two I'd as soon as not would find it out, Jonathan and his disgustin' wife among 'em. Them that's allers on the lookout themselves thinks others would if they could, and is disappinted.

Your affectionate confidential,

MISS CHARITY GRINDER.

P. S.—Look at Godey's and see if you think the bride costoom is handsome. CHARITY GRINDER.

P. P. S.—Would you hev curls or bands? C. G.

EXTRA P. P. S.—I hear him groanin' agin. I know it's the butcher's bill. My soul feels tu pity him. Next time I sign mebbe it won't be Charity Grinder, but Charity F——. Spare my blushes, I can't konklude.

Letter Second.

NEW YORK, May 30th, 1866.

DEAR BROTHER THOMAS:—Don't be alarmed when I tell you that unforeseen circumstances compel me to leave New York at once. I haven't murdered any one; I haven't run off with any one's money—I haven't been trusted with any; it isn't fear of the cholera; it's something more dreadful than that epidemic, which I had far rather have than Miss Charity Grinder. It's out now, Thomas. It's a woman. If I don't leave New York she'll make me marry her.

You are a bachelor, Thomas. You don't know what curtain lectures are. You don't know what it is not to be allowed to smoke—to have some one always jealous of the housemaid. An angel couldn't induce me, and Miss Grinder is *not* an angel.

You ask why I allow myself to be thus terrified. You don't know the woman. She is in my house. She rules the household; she snubs Amanda; she insults young Jones, to whom Amanda is engaged; she makes love to me. Some day she will say I have proposed—perhaps will compel me to do so—and will *marry me!!!*

I never was determined, firm, self-asserting—whatever you please to call it. I can't say, "Miss Grinder, you must go home." Amanda daresn't. Whenever I go out I have Miss Grinder on my arm. She sings off my hymn-book in church. People have said to Amanda, "I hear your pa is about to give you a step-ma."

I can't withstand the tide of public opinion. I can't, as a gentleman—if Miss Grinder says, "Mr. Floger, will you have me?"—say "No." I must fly before she does it. You smile with scorn. Pity me! I shall leave to-night, by stealth, like a burglar. I'm going to Boston. Tibbets has employed me to do some collecting. I want you to go down and shut up the office. The rent is paid a month in advance. Perhaps Miss Grinder may go in a month, and I may return. Watch the house and write me on the instant when that event occurs.

I can't save myself; Amanda can't save me. Brave as you are, you couldn't, my dear brother Thomas. Already she has given away silverware and things to a person calling himself a confidential assistant; sold my winter overcoat to a Jew, who gave her two pink vases for it; scratched the lights out of the eyes of a portrait with a table-knife, under the impression they were spatters of whitewash; kindled the fire with a very rare old edition of Shakespeare; given a good girl—as girls go—warning without permission, and made me a red flannel dressing-gown, which she will make me wear every evening.

A week ago she cooked a detestable mess for dinner, and on tasting it I involuntarily uttered an exclamation of disgust.

"Is anything the matter?" said she.

Said I, not to be impolite, "A sudden pain, ma'am. It is over."

And then, oh! Thomas, and then she scraped the chimney—the kitchen chimney—and made *soot tea*, which she said was the only remedy for symptoms of cholera.

The more I declared I had none, the more she said I had, and at last muttered these awful words:

"No, Mr. Floger; there ain't no use denying on't. You only don't want fur tu alarm your too susceptible Charity. But it's her duty fur tu take keer on you, and she'll du it. Hold your pa's nose, Amandy, and I'll make him swaller."

And the dear girl, whom she had alarmed concerning the cholera, *did* hold my nose, and I—swallowed—the—soot—tea! Augh!

May you never have such a mouthful!

You see, my dear brother, I must fly. Tell Amanda not to feel anxious, but don't inform her where I am. Charity Grinder will have it out of her i' you do, and may follow me.

It is eleven o'clock. I must go, if I would catch the train. My portmanteau is packed. Adieu until we meet.

Your afflicted brother, PETER FLOGER.

Capt. THOMAS FLOGER, N. Y.

NUMBER TWENTY-FOUR.

MISS CHARITY SPEAKS OF DENTISTS.

No, Miss Dusenberry, I can't say as how I hev any pertickeler faith in dentifrices. My belief is how't when Providence gives you the toothache, you've got to grin and bear it.

How I talk! you think you kin be saved most o' the pain by takin' your teeth in time? Ridiculous! Why, I can prove tu the contrary by my cousin, Tiffany Briggs. Never heerd on him? Wall, I declare! He was considered a very talented young man—consid'rable above the rest o' the Brigges, in pint o' intelectability—took more arter me in that respect.

Well, the rest on 'em was tinsmiths, and they calkerlated how't Tiffany would be glad to ketch hold and help, when he was old enough; but, land o' liberty! he didn't take no sense o' the tin perfession.

Sez he to his pa, "Pa," sez he, "it's well enough for Ned and Dick to live among sarcepans, but I'm o' another natur'," sez he.

"Lor'," sez his pa. "How in thunder did ye come by it?"

"Dunno," sez Tiffany. "It was born in me—I can't stoop tu tins."

"Well," sez his pa, "seein' you ain't no airthly use in the shop, I'm willin' to humor ye, and ef you'd like to be a mason, there's Plaster Brickman will take you 'prentice."

"Oh," sez Tiffany, groanin', "don't jest, pa. These here feelin's o' mine is tu holy. A mason, never!"

"Well, what then?" sez his pa.

"I'd like tu be a poet," sez Tiffany.

"You sha'n't! that's flat," sez his pa.

"Then I must be a learned perfession," sez Tiffany.

"Ef the tin line ain't that, what is?" sez Mr. Briggs.

"Well," sez Tiffany, "you didn't comprehend, pa; there's but three learned perfessions—doctorin', preachin', and lawyerin'."

"What du you know about any on 'em?" sez B.

"Well," sez he, "ef I had a diplomy, I'd doctor."

"You desarve to be hung," sez his pa.

Jest then his ma comes in with the paper, and, hearin' what was goin' on, sez:

"Why, land o' Goshen! why don't you be a dentifrice? Take a set o' lessons, and then sot up in Peekskill. It can't take long, and you'd be called 'doctor.'"

Sez Tiffany, "I will, ma."

And next week he went tu York. He took six lessons, and came back perfect. He fetched along three big gold teeth to hang out, and a sign a yard long, and a lot o' gold leaf and wax, and purty soon 'twas all over town how't Tiffany Briggs was a graddyated dentifrice.

He was good-lookin', fur a Briggs; so it 'twarn't long before every gal found out she hed suthin' tu du tu her teeth, and Tiffany had a run o' bizness. The heft of 'em had the toothache reg'lar arter once goin' tu him; which I think was a judgment for not submittin' in the fust place.

Well, one day Melindy Jenks came in to me, and sez I:

"How are ye, Melindy?"

Sez she, "*Miserable!*"

"Lor'," sez I, "what ails ye?"

"A tooth," sez she. "I spent a hull week in York tryin' to hev it out."

"Wouldn't it come?" sez I.

"Well," sez she, "the truth is, every dentist I went tu, the minnit I got into the cheer, away up in the air, and had my head well back, they went and kissed me."

"All of 'em?" sez I.

"Yes," sez she. "Even an old sinner with gray hair. Then, of course, I wouldn't stay."

"Well," sez I, "that comes o' not hevin' a person o' dignitude along fur tu purtect ye. Tell ye what, Melindy, you come to my Cousin Briggs, and I'll sot by, and eff he was so inclined, he wouldn't durst kiss ye."

Sez she, "I'll go, and thank ye

And we went.

Well, there was Tiffany, with a mustache half a yard long; and he purtended tu take airs and graces, and fur tu doubt whether he hed time fur another patient. I stopped him short.

"Jest get Melindy's tooth out," sez I. "The hull o' Peekskill ain't a comin'."

So he ground her up in a cheer, and took out a lot o' instruments, and went toward her.

She shut her mouth tight.

Sez he, "Ef ye don't open your mouth I can't extract your tooth."

"Oh," sez she, "I know you'll hurt."

"I won't," sez he; "it's raythcr pleasant."

"Well," sez she.

She opens her mouth, and he puts in his thingumbob, and she yells.

He takes it out.

Sez she, "Is it over?"

Sez he, "It ain't tetched."

She opens her mouth agin, and he pulls and she screeches, and out comes a tooth—a rale nice white one.

Sez she, "Oh, you've made a mistake! I tried to speak, but you smothered me. It's a wrong tooth!"

So 'twas; on the other side.

So sez he, "No matter," sez he, "I can put it in agin."

"Will it grow?" sez I.

"Of course," sez he; "like a weed."

So in he sticks it.

"Which is the tooth?" sez he.

"The black one." sez she.

So he grabs agin.

Out comes suthin'.

Melindy kicks like mad.

Sez she, "It ain't right yet."

"Must be," sez he.

And, come tu see it, it wasn't.

So Tiffany plants it back and pulls. This time 'twas the right one, but only the top.

He looks in, and sez he, "Well, that's all right."

Sez she, "It aches worse."

"Well," sez he, "you see there ain't nuthin' tu ketch hold of; so I've got tu leave the root. The tooth is out—it's only the root is there. Put hops tu your face, and I reckon you won't hev no trouble."

"I hope not," sez she. "Well, now, what du you tax?"

"Well," sez Tiffany, "seein' it's a friend o' Cousin Charity's, I'll do it cheap. I've extracted three teeth—that's six dollars; and then a dollar a piece fur puttin' the two you changed your mind about back—that's eight."

Melindy paid it, and went hum. That night she had the awfulest fit o' neuralogy in the head, groaned and shrieked, and they had tu send fur the doctor. He gin her lots o' medicine, and bled her. Didn't du no good, though, and there she laid a week, 'most out of her mind.

Seemed as ef she was a-goin', she suffered so. She wouldn't let no one come near her mouth, and couldn't eat nuthin'. Well, seein' she was so bad, they sent for most o' the relationships, and 'mongst 'em came Aunt Peggy, from Prattsville.

The minute she saw her, sez she:

"Why, how the gal's face is swelled!"

"It's a sign o' the wust," sez I.

"Nonsense!" sez she. "It's a tooth. Where does it hurt you?" sez she.

"My hull head," sez Melindy.

"Water on the brain," sez I, whisperin'. "The doctor, he's given her camelmile and kwinine, and he's bled her, and all. Medicine's o' no avail."

Sez Aunt Peggy:

"Nonsense, Charity. Tell ye it's teeth; the wurst o' tooth-aches seems to be all over ye. Open yer mouth, honey."

She opens her mouth.

"How it's swelled," sez she. "Can't hardly see the teeth. But, land alive, Melindy, I never heerd o' teeth mortifyin'. The tew next the eye-teeth looks like it."

Sez she, "Oh, aunt, them's what was put in agin."

So, arter that, Aunt Peggy had the hull story. She opens the windy wide, and looks at the teeth, and sez she:

"The nasty, good-for-nothing ignoramus. Dentist! Why, he's a butcher!"

"Eh?" sez I. "You're speakin' o' a relationship o' mine, Miss Peggy, I'd hev ye know."

Sez she, "I don't care. Send for the doctor this minnit."

And I was skeered, and sent little Tom, for Aunt Peggy was a smart woman, and I knew it.

"What has he done?" sez I.

"Well," sez she, "fustly, left the tooth that ached in."

"Only the root," sez I.

"Bah," sez she. "Then he's put the other two back—*up side down*—and the flesh has swelled 'round 'em, and fastened 'em tight as wax."

Melindy begins to cry. "Air you sure?" sez she.

"Yes," sez Aunt Peggy. "There's the roots stickin up—look for yerself, Miss Grinder." Wall, she was right.

Old Doctor Doseum he came, and he lanced the gums, and pulled out the teeth; and, as soon as she could bear it, took out the root. And Aunt Peggy poulticed, and bathed, and fed Melindy up, and pitched out the rest o' the camelmile and kwinine, and Melindy was well in a week.

Her pa called on Cousin Tiffany, and when he heerd what had occurred, he offered tu give back the tew dollars for plantin' the teeth, seein' they was in upside down.

The old gentleman took it; but he didn't act with dignitude, and offered tu kick Cousin Tiffany, and called him a lot o' names. The families warn't friends from that minute.

So, you see, Miss Dusenberry, I hain't no faith in these here dentifrices.

Cousin Tiffany graddyated in a course o' six lessons, and had all that was required to use in his perfession, and he didn't du Melindy no good. It's goin' agin Providence, and won't be blest; though Tiffany is practicin' yet a few miles out o' Peekskill, and they do say there never was such an awful place for toothache as them parts is.

NUMBER TWENTY-FIVE.

CHARITY DISCOVERS MORE INIQUITY.

I never had no aynomosity agin Dorinda Sniffin. I'd scorn it. Let them hev feelin's o' that natur' that ain't above it, and don't allude it to me. Ef she says I had any inclination fur tu avail myself o' the intentions o' Mandy's pa, I won't tell her she lies, only that she's mistook. But ef she ain't no more of a lady than tu say how't I meant "tu catch him," I'm obligated as a rectangular person and a member tu tell her that it's a falsehood. Me that had ruther be a vestal virgin than a Benedictine any day.

Hevin' writ so much for the public o' late, I feel myself quite fetched before the world and called upon tu defend myself from such objurations. Otherwise I'd retire with the usual dignitude o' my character, without a word. Seein' as things is as they be, though, I feel obligated tu state the reasons why I wouldn't hev Mandy's pa fur nothin' the Garden o' Eden couldn't offer, let alone a miserable muddy world o' woe. Fustly: He *is* Mandy's pa; and bein', I feel tu regret that Mandy is sure tu turn out awful. I shouldn't like folks tu allude her eend tu her step-ma, as they'd be sure tu.

Secondly: I might hev had him ef I would, and I've said a dozen times tu him, when he sithed and looked tender, and told me how blest his existence had orter be ef he possessed my hand.

"No, sir, I couldn't think o' enterin' intu conjugular relations with a widiwer. Abandon the idee," sez I, "and forgit Charity Grinder."

He couldn't, poor man, and he's flowed.

Fustly—I mean thirdly—he's old enough to be *my* pa, and he wears a wig, and his opinions doesn't coinsist with mine. And thems the reasons I didn't hev him, not because I couldn't catch him. Dorinda Sniffin judges by herself.

I didn't mean to drive him out o' his senses. F'raps ef I'd a known the effect my conduct would hev I shouldn't ha' been so obdurate in my declension o' him. But unless you hev the gift o' prophesy ye can't forsee events which is tu happen in the mortal world. I grieve tu ha' caused the absconsion of Mandy's pa; but I couldn't give my hand where my heart hadn't went, and ef my refusal has driv him from his native land tu Bosting, I feel tu be sorry, but not to blame myself. As fur Dorinda Sniffin I pity and despise her.

However, when yer life is spent in duin' acts o' benevolents, as mine is, it's easy tu forget them that is narrer-minded enough tu talk agin you; and at present my mind is occupied with a young woman o' the name o' Parten that lives jest opposite tu where I am stoppin' with Gusty Gulliver.

They're very nice people the Gullivers. She's fashionable,

and he is suthin' down town that makes him as mad as hops when things in the eatable way goes down. Someun told me he was a speculater, and whatever bizness that may be it appears tu be a tryin' one tu the temper.

It's a good way up town, in a quite romantical spot near the North River. Folks as is addicted tu sentiment walk down to the banks o' pleasant evenin's; but the muskeeters is tu thick for me. I ginerally sit tu the winder observin' human nature; and if there's one I've observed more'n another, it's that Miss Parten. Firstly, she's dreadful hity-tity, and thinks herself good-lookin', and nextly, I have my suspicions how't she ain't all she should be.

Well, I've kept my eye on her off and on, and remarked how late she sot up, and how she read novels a Sabberday; and so when I heerd anything peculiar I was apt tu take notice.

One night I did. 'Twas a kind o' wailin' cry. I got up and peeked out o' my windy, and there, sure enough, was a light in Miss Parten's, and I heerd her voice a-talkin'. 'Twas a very handsome night, and everybody's sashes was up.

Sez she, "The thing is sick, or it 'twouldn't yell so."

Sez the masculine voice o' Mr. Parten, "Mebbe 'tain't bin fed."

Sex she, "It has. I won't be bothered this here way forever. I'll get rid o' the plague."

Sez he, "You can't."

Sez she, "I will, if I have this to bear agin."

And then I heerd a kind o' whacking sound, and all was silent.

'Bout an hour arter it begun, though, and then I knowed 'twas the voice o' a child. The poor creeter kept it up all night—sich moans and screeches I never heerd. They continued until the dawn o' day. I'd heerd o' unnat'ral parents, but never o' any so unnat'ral as the Partens.

Next day I felt it my duty tu keep an eye on 'em. He was goin' somewhere with a portmantel, and she staid tu hum. The hull day I heerd the cries of the neglected infant, and in the evenin' they was worse. At last I retired tu bed and sunk into a agitated slumber.

About ten I was awoke by a light on my ceilin'. I seen at once how 'twas Miss Parten movin' a lamp. I jumped up and went tu the winder. There was a light in her chamber, and she was standin' there with a basket in her hand a-tyin' down the cover after puttin' in a brickbat. My blood froze in a minute; I knew what she was a doin'. It all rushed on me like a whirlwind; and when I seen her put on a hat and shawl and come out o' her door, I thought I should keel over.

But the presence o' mind I'm remarkable for come tu my aid, and I seized a quilt petticut o' mine and a shawl, and put 'em on, and rushed down tu the Gullivers' room.

I knocked in a agitated manner, and sez she, "What's the matter?"

Sez I, "It ain't for no common thing I'm summoning you

at this disrespectable hour. But it's your duty to wake Mr. Gulliver immediate."

They was skeered at that, and out in the entry in a minute.

"Du you want to be humble instrument o' preventin' parracide?" sez I.

"Yes," sez he, "of course."

"Then," sez I, "foller me. The young woman opposite has jest put a new-born infant in a basket along with a brickbat, and is goin' tu the river tu drown it."

"What du I hear?" sez he.

"The solemn truth," sez I.

Sez he, "There ain't no time to be lost." So he gets his hat and things, and we all three went down stairs.

"You tew go on and watch her," sez Mr. Gulliver. "I'll bring a policeman;" and away he scoots, and we tew, purtected by our consciousness o' doin' our duty, went on alone.

The young woman wasn't in no hurry, but she was goin' tu the river straight.

Sez I tu Miss Gulliver:

"Could you imagine there was sich iniquity in the world?"

Sez she, "Yes; and so could you if you'd took the New York papers as long as I have."

Jest then I held up my hand for silence, for we was close beside her, and she was goin' ontu the wharf.

Jest then, tew, we observed Mr. Gulliver fetchin' a policeman around the corner.

We went a leetle nearer, and she stopped. She sots the basket down, and sez she, out loud:

"I don't half like it, poor little wretch. It's got to be done, though."

Then she picks up the basket and swings it, and sez she:

"Here goes then——"

But I caught her gownd, and Miss Gulliver screeched, and the policeman and Mr. Gulliver rushed up and caught her.

Sez she, "Oh dear! oh dear! Help! murder! thieves! Oh!"

Sez the policeman, "None of that, young woman; 'twon't save you."

Sez she, "Oh, let me go!"

Sez he, "When I get you to the station-house."

Sez she, "You ain't arrestin' me?"

Sez he, "Don't play innocent."

Sez she, "Oh! where is Mr. Parten? Why ain't he here tu purtect me?"

Sez I, "Nothin' won't purtect you, you parracide. You're caught in the act. Poor little critter! a minute more you'd a ended its life. Give me the basket."

"Lor'," sez she, "all this fuss ain't about this?"

Sez I, "You wretch!"

Sez Mr. Gulliver, "You fiend!"

Sez Miss Gulliver, "You onnat'ral relative!"

Sez the policeman, "There'll be a little more fuss yet. I

never seen anybody take it so cool as you. Du you know the penalty?"

"No," sez she. "Du you belong to the Humane Society?"

"No," sez I. "But we are able to prevent depravity o' this nature. We ain't a-goin' tu stand by and see a young creeter murdered."

"Well," sez she, "the thing was sick."

"You'd orter cared the more for it," sez Miss Gulliver.

"And kept me awake nights," sez she.

"Walk along," sez the policeman.

Sez she, "You've no right to use me so."

Sez I, "How hev you used your child?"

"My child?" sez she. "I haven't one."

"No," sez I, "p'raps not by this time. It may be smothered. Untie the strings, Miss Gulliver."

"Smothered?" sez she.

"Yes," sez I, "it may be."

She stares, and sez she:

"I beg your pardon, ma'am, but what du you think is in the basket?"

"Your murdered infant!" sez I.

"Gracious goodness!" sez she. "You ridiculous old thing."

Sez the policeman, "Of all hardened women, you beat."

Sez Miss Gulliver, "I've got the basket open, and the poor little thing is inside. It's quite naked, but it's alive, for it moves. Oh!" sez she, "it's gettin' up!" and she screeches.

Jest then we came under a street-lamp, and we all stopped.

The light was bright, and we all saw the baby give a jump, and rise up on all fours.

It was naked, and as white as a ghost.

I screeched, and Mr. Gulliver jest caught it in time tu save it from fallin' tu the ground out o' the basket.

"Heavens and earth!" sez he. "It's——"

"Dead?" sez I.

"No," sez he. "It ain't a baby at all. It's a Newfoundland pup. What a confounded set of fools we have been. If ever I listen to a word a woman says, may I be shot."

Well, sure enough, it *was* a pup, and instead o' turnin' tu me, as they ought, and sayin', "Miss Grinder, your intentions was the best, though unforeseen circumstances prevents them from succeedin'," they sot tew apologize tu Miss Parten.

I didn't wait tu hear 'em; I jest turned away and proceeded home with dignitude, and tu-day I'm goin tu take up my quarters elsewhere. The Gullivers air not congenial, and though I wish 'em well, I don't enjoy myself.

NUMBER TWENTY-SIX.

CHARITY IS THE CAUSE OF A DUEL.

As a gineral thing I don't consider how't a boardin'-house is proper fur a lady that ain't as yet united intu the holy bonds o' matrimony, but I've been obligated tu go tu one. There's a nat'ral unhosperbility in Yorkers, and jest at present the heft o' them I know is tu mad tu stop with, anyway, so I've took board. It's very agreeable here, and there's several gentlemen o' the greatest intilectability. The only fault I find with 'em is they will be so pinted in their intentions tu me. Can't so much as look at the salt but they parse it, and as fur butter, I've hed tew plates offered me at once. Not that the landlady would hev none handed tu nobody ef she could help it, I do believe. Tew the right o' me sets Perfesser Huffin, and tu the left there's Doctor Optic, and oppersite there's a very fine elderly gentleman of the name of Mister Brown, Esquire—I seen it on a letter, and ollers make use o' the titles, though the rest don't; and them three is each tryin' tu cut the other out. Makes me quite confused, sometimes, and the landlady, Miss Butler, hoppin' mad. You see, like the heft o' widdys, she sottin' her cap fur

anybody she kin get, and wants tu keep the hull o' their intentions for herself.

Things hed gone on in this here way a considerable time, when one day we sot down tu dinner as usual, and got a-talkin o' the weather.

"Amazin' cold for this time o' the year," sez the perfesser.

"Very," sez the doctor.

"Good nights fur sleepin'," sez Mr. Brown, Esquire.

"Sleep," sez the perfesser. "There's no sleep, cold or warm, fur the cats. Minute I retire," sez he, "tew seek kind Natur's sweet disturber, that minute they begin tu howl."

"It is awful!" sez Miss Butler, puttin' in her oar. "Poor Miss Jennings and famerly didn't rest at all, they say."

"It's infamous!" sez the perfesser, handing round the bread.

There was tew dishes on the table, and it so happened, jest as he handed me his'n, Mr. Brown, Esquire, handed me one from the other side.

Now I was in a diplomy—you may imagine. Ef I took the perfesser's, why, nat'rally, I'd offend Mr. Brown, Esquire.

"La," sez I, my heart palpitatin', though I strove tu conceal it. "La! I'm forehanded fur bread—dunno which tew take."

"Mine is the nearest," sez the perfesser.

"So it air," sez I, and helped myself. "Obligated all the same tu *you*, Mr. Brown, Esq.," sez I.

He looked smilin', but I knowed how't he hed a command o' countenance, and was able fur tu dissimerlate.

There was more talk about the cats and things arter that, and then some about the high prices, and when they'd come down.

"Peas is exorbiant," sez Miss Butler, "and as fur grass, you'd be astonished tu know how much it comes tew, and I'm sure they only put a quart in their half pecks nowadays."

"I should think so," sez I. "You must be cheated awful, Miss Butler; the taters didn't more'n go round once."

She turns up her nose, and speaks to the waiter gal, and she fetched in the pie—about tew inches tew each head of boarders, and a fork as big as a pitchfork to pick it up with.

The perfesser made tew bites o' his'n, but the doctor jest swallowed his at one. He eats purty quick, because he's in a hurry tew get back tew his room, on account o' a book on the causes o' dispepsy he's writin'.

Well, he hurried off, but Mr. Brown, Esq., and the perfesser lingered tew the last.

We'd left the table, and I was lookin' out o' the windy, when I heerd the fust-named gentleman say:

"Perfesser, may I hev a moment o' conversation with you?"

"Sartainly, sir," sez the perfesser, and in a minute I began to guess what was goin' on.

I seen 'em go tew the balcony, and I follered. Nat'rally I was obliged tew wait a minute before I concealed myself in the curtings, so I lost the fust o' the conversation. But I heerd enough, as it was.

The fust words I remember was these:

"You agree then, sir?"

"Delighted, I'm sure," sez the perfesser.

"I'm a good shot," sez Mr. Brown, Esq.

"So am *I*," sez the perfesser. "Dew you prefer a Minie rifle or a revolver?"

"A revolver," sez Mr. Brown, Esq.

"I'll take the rifle," sez the perfesser.

"Well, at eleven, then. You'll meet me here?"

"Punctually," sez Mr. Brown, Esq.

And the tew dispersed, leavin' me in a swoondin' condition under the curtings.

"What shill I dew?" sez I. "Pervent it, if possible, but heow?"

'Twas sartain Miss Butler warn't a pertickeler friend o' mine, but it warn't likely she'd be willin' tew hev a duel in her house; and, at last, I concluded tew confide in her. The day was drawin' tew a close, and no time was tew be lost.

Jest as the clock struck nine, I went intu the dining-room, where she was mixin' fritters, and sez I:

"Miss Butler, I've got suthin' tew tell you."

"Tew tell *me*," sez she.

"Yes, 'm," sez I. "It is an affair o' the utmost importance, or I wouldn't hev troubled you."

"'Tain't bugs, is it?" sez she.

"No," sez I. "Them I can't come tew speak of, whatever I may feel."

"You ain't gettin' cholera, I hope," sez she. "Because this house ain't a hospital, and I wouldn't want it burned down, and

my boarders would leave me if I was put into tents and barricaded."

"I am puffectly salubrious, ma'am," sez I.

"Well," sez she, "what is it?"

"A affair o' bloodshed," sez I.

"Hey?" sez she.

"A dewel," sez I.

"A dewel?" sez she.

"Yes," sez I. "Don't ask me who is the unhappy cause; but tew o' your boarders has quarreled, and a dewel is the consequence."

"Dewels ain't fought nowadays," sez she.

Sez I: "I heerd the app'ntment. At table, Mr. Brown, Esquire, and the perfesser both parsed the same lady, whose name I needn't mention, a plate o' bread. From that has ariz a quarrel o' a fearful natur', and they are goin tew fight—him with a revolver, and the perfesser with a gun.

"When?" sez she.

"At eleven tu-night, on the balcony," sez I.

"The old fools!" sez she.

"Lor'!" sez I, "no such great fools. They consider how't their affections has been trifled with."

"Bother!" sez she. "The perfesser owes me tew weeks' board. We must tell Doctor Optic, and get advice. Of course, if we told 'em beforehand, they'd do it somewhere else. I dew think they're crazy. They must hev quarreled about suthin' more important."

Sez I, "I wish I could think so, Miss Butler."

Then I sighed.

"Ruining a respectable boardin'-house," sez she. "*I* won't hev it. People putting their lives in danger, while they owe me tew weeks' board."

Then she jest pulled down her sleeves, and we ran up tew the doctor's room. There we told him the whole story.

He wouldn't believe it at first. Then he said how 'twas a joke.

"'Twouldn't do to accuse 'em of it," he said. "It's ridiculous."

"Well," sez I, "I tell you what; there's a pantry in the din-in'-room; let us three go in there and watch. Ef they don't come, we're mistook. Ef they do, we'll prevent bloodshed."

Sez Miss Butler, "That's a very good plan;" but, jest as she said that, the door-bell rang, and there come a message how't her married daughter Perliny had got a heir, and she was tu come and dress it.

"Lor'," sez she, "I've got tew go; but here's the key o' the pantry. You and the doctor kin watch as well as me. Mind, it locks outside."

Well, I took the keys, and as it was gettin' on, me and the doctor went down at once; we didn't take a light, and it was purty dark, but we unlocked the pantry and went in. I was fur leavin' the door open, but the doctor shut it tew avoid observation.

Well, we waited about an hour, and at the eend o' that time

there was a noise—footsteps a-comin' down stairs. Next minute I heerd the perfesser's voice.

"Mr. Brown," sez he, "here's the revolver."

"Thank you, sir," sez Mr. Brown, Esq.

"You are right, after all," sez the doctor. "Gracious heavens, what a pair of idiots! Open the door, please, Miss Grinder.

"I can't find the handle," sez I.

"Neither can I," sez he.

Then the truth flashed onto me.

"Doctor," sez I, "this here is one o them locks only onto one side. We can't get out."

"You're right," sez he. "We're in a trap."

"We can't prevent the dewel," sez I. "They're at it now. Kick, doctor."

"'Tain't any use," sez the doctor; "it's unpossible tew git out."

Just then suthin' went "bang!"

"They're shootin'," sez I.

"Great goodness! yes," sez the doctor.

Bang went suthin' else.

"That's the rifle," sez the doctor.

And the perfesser's voice was heerd:

"I've shot him—through the head."

"He's murdered Mr. Brown, Esq.," sez I.

"Help!" yells the doctor.

"Murder!" sez I.

"Fire!" sez the doctor.

"Murder! murder! murder! Thieves!" sez I. "Perfesser has shot Mr. Brown, Esq.! Help! help!"

We heerd the boarders rushin' about. Soon they was down stairs.

"Where air they?" sez one.

"Where air they?" sez another.

"In here," sez somebody.

And they pulled the pantry door open. Then the hull horror o' our sittuvation rushed upon me.

"What's the matter?" sez one.

"Oh, it's Miss Grinder," sez another.

Sez the doctor:

"Friends, this ain't no time to explain. Murder has been done. Perfesser Huffin has assassernated Mr. Brown."

"And me the afflicted cause," sez I. "Why didn't I take tew breads?"

The ladies was faintin', the gentlemen standin' stock-still, and me a-wringin' my hands, when the windy opens, and in walks the perfesser with his rifle.

"Apprehend the murderer!" sez the doctor.

But nobody liked tew tech him for fear he'd fire.

He looks round, and sez:

"What on airth!"

"Ah!" sez the doctor, "don't dissemble, villain!"

"You've shot him," sez I. "We heerd you."

Sez he: "I hope I hev."

"Wretch!" sez the doctor.

"Yes," sez he, "through the head. He'll not trouble me again."

"Don't think I shall favor your intentions," sez I. "No; Charity Grinder is not to be won thus."

"Hey!" sez he. "He warn't yours—was he?"

"Sir!" sez I.

"Arrest the murderer!" sez the doctor.

The perfesser stares. Jest then the winder opens again, and in comes Mr. Brown, Esq., with tew cats by the tails—one black, and one gray.

"Land o' liberty!" sez he. "Didn't expect so much company. But, since you're here, this is the perfesser's, and this mine. We'll hev some sleep now, I reckon."

Sez the doctor: "Did you come down here tew shoot *cats*?"

"Yes," sez he. "Don't you see 'em?"

"Miss Grinder informed me——" sez the doctor.

But I didn't wait tew hear no more. I flowed tew my room, and this mornin' am about tew leave. Arter the remarks that has been made about me, my dignitude demands that I should go.

P. S.—Couldn't the society fur the development o' cruelty to animals do nothin' about the shootin' o' thim cats? I'd like to hev the perfesser and Mr. Brown, Esquire, hung for it if I could.

NUMBER TWENTY-SEVEN.

CHARITY REVEALS A FAMILY SECRET.

He, he, he! Here I am, Samanthy. Don't you go to runnin' away. 'Tain't no stranger—only me. I hate bein' stiff and ceremonious, so I jest come in the back kitching way, without knocking. Don't ye make any company o' me. A plate o' milk-toast, or strawberry short-cake, or an omlight, or anythin' you happen to toss up will do for lunch. I allus make a p'int o' takin' that at a friend's. These here restorationers cheat so. Land o' liberty! they charge all creation fur a couple o' bites, and restoration vittles kinder seems to leave you empty; besides, you come under the observation o' the men sect, which has a habit o' starin' at persons o' a prepossessin' appearance, even if they air approachin' matoority.

Washin', hey? How yaller your things hev got. But playin' the pianner and crotcheting don't make good workin' hands.

Well, I hain't seen ye sence you was about thirteen, I should say. You don't favor your age—kinder scraggy and yaller you've got. But them that marries early ginerally shows it. Singular blessedness fur me, unless me and my pardner was congenial.

You hope you and Simeon air? Oh, well, I don't say but

what you *be*—only folks are allers askin' me how on airth you caught him.

Didn't hev to ketch, hey? So I allers say. Sez I, "S'posin' I'd made up my mind to hev any one. Sim Slum would have been the last. Fustly, his hair is most on't gone, and next his legs is bow; and then the pecooliarity o' his sittiwation would ha' deterred a lady o' my delicacy o' feelin' from unitin' with him.

What pecooliarity? Never knowed nothin', eh? Why, good gracious! there's a'most an awful secret connected with the birth o' your pardner. Sence he hasn't told it, probably I'm indiscriminate in alludin' tu it. I sha'n't say nothin' more. Don't urge me. Pass me the cold mutton, please, and the salt.

You *must* know? Why, marsy me! I wouldn't hev spoke ef I'd a-thought—though 'twas pecooliar fur tu take a pardner without tellin' her. Your husband, Miss Slum, dunno tu this day whether he's his own uncle or his own nephew.

Am I crazy? Law, no! Jest keep up your sperits and I'll tell ye.

Old Grand'ther Slum lost his fust wife airly, you know, and him and his son Eben, they kep' bachelder's hall together, until Eben was thirty. Then he took and got married to a widdy with a grown gal o' sixteen. He did it unbeknownst to grand'ther, and the old gentleman was hoppin' mad.

Sez he, "I'll punish him for it, ef I kin," and the way he took was to marry the widdy's darter.

He punished himself the worst, for she led him a awful life—

was one o' them critters that would go out—and he was so jealous he allers went with her, rheumatics or not. Finally it killed him—hain't a doubt. That ain't the story, though.

Well, the two couple wouldn't speak for awhile, but in a year or so they made up, and went to live in his own house—grand'ther's, I mean—away at the eend o' Peekskill. There they staid.

Well, one night I was stayin' with Miss Doctor Kobbles—she was a friend o' mine—when some one flies up the steps and bangs the knocker, and sez he, when we looks out:

"Doctor Kobbles in?"

Sez Miss Kobbles, "No," sez she. "Where is it?"

"The senior Mr. Slum's," sez he.

"Well," sez she, "what a pity he's out! I'll come," and off she went in a hurry.

A few minutes arter the bell rung agin.

I went tu the door.

"Docter in?" sez a voice.

"No," sez I, "but he's expected. Where is it?"

"Well," sez he, "it's at the junior Mr. Slum's."

Sez I, "*I'll* come, and leave word for the doctor," and over I went.

Well, two such handsome babies I never saw—you know ugly people is said to be handsome babies ginerally—a couple o' most beautiful boys. Me and Miss Kobbles dressed 'em like picters, and put 'em side by side in the crib together.

"Ain't they like twins?" sez she.

"Indeed they are," sez I.

And then, bein' exhausted with the excitement, we jest sot down and had a glass o' toddy. Not as a beveridge—me and Miss Kobble was above takin' it that way—but as a medicine.

There was some cake, tu, and we eat that, and talked and rocked, and had a comfortable time, until some one knocked at the door, and in comes the two pas.

Sez old Mr. Slum, in a hurry, "Nice boy, eh? Look like me?"

"Law, yes," sez I. "The image."

Sez Mr. Slum, junior, "How about mine?"

"Well, *he* favors his ma," sez Miss Kobbles.

"They're both beauties," sez I.

Just then in comes the doctor.

"The finest children *I* ever saw," sez he.

"And the senior Mr. Slum's looks like him, don't he, doctor?" sez Miss Kobbles.

"Precisely," sez the doctor.

"And the junior Mr. Slum's—*he's* the image o' Miss Slum, hain't he?" sez I.

"Such a likeness *I* never knew," sez the doctor.

Well, Mr. Slum, junior, looked pleased, and Mr. Slum, senior, a little taller than before; and finally he walks up to the cradle, and sez he:

"Well, now, *this*—ah, yes—this—ahem—which *is* mine, Miss Kobbles?"

She turns red as a beet, and sez she:

"Law, as if you didn't know! Tell him, Charity."

Sez I, "I sha'n't. Let him guess."

"Well," sez she, "doctor, *you* tell him."

"I don't know myself, my dear," sez the doctor.

Sez she, "Massy me!"

Sez I, "Don't tell me, Miss Kobbles, how't *you've* forgot!"

Sez she, "Don't say *you* hev, Charity."

I sot down onto a cheer, and couldn't speak. I didn't know which was which any more'n the rest did; and what's more I never did know, and never expect to.

Mr. Slum, junior, stood and stared. Mr. Slum, senior, pulled ontu his hair.

"Tell me which is my child," sez he.

Sez I, "I can't."

Sez Doctor Kobbles, "*I* can't. Perhaps instinct may teach ——"

"Instinct be bothered," sez Mr. Slum. "Tell me which is my offspring."

"It's past the power o' man, unless the clothes is marked," sez the doctor.

Sez I, "We'll find out by them."

But come tu look *they* were mixed up, tu. Some o' one's on this, and some o' t'others on that.

Well, Mr. Slum, senior, tore his hair, and pounded his head until he skeered us; and Mr. Slum, junior, sez:

"Pa, sence it can't be helped, make the best on't. One baby is the same as another, a'most."

Sez the old gentleman:

"The same! Why, Eben Slum, air you distracted? How will my unhappy child ever know whether he's his own uncle or own nephew? That's the awful consequence o' this mixin'. He'll never know his proper relationship tu his own famerly."

"Never thought o' that, par," sez Mr. Slum, junior. "What shill we du?"

There warn't nuthin' tu be done, only fetch 'em up.

But old Mr. Slum told Dr. Kobbles how't he'd intended for tu disinherit Eben, and leave the heft o' the property tu this child, and now 'twarn't no use, because he might be makin' a mistake and disinheritin' his own child for Eben's.

Then jest consider the poor Miss Slums' state o' mind. Miss Eben Slum might be nursin' her own half-brother and brother-in-law, instead o' her son. And Miss Slum, senior, might fetch up her step-grandson, instead o' her own heir. Then what on airth was tu be done when they was christened?

'Twas a house o' mournin' for a spell, and the reporters from the "Peekskill Budjet o' News" came down to find out about it, and hev the babies' fotographs.

Poor, dear Miss Slums; they didn't know which to take nor how tu choose.

Fust week they divided 'em round, and then 'twas discovered that the one Miss Eben Slum had was goin' to hev black hair, and must be Miss Slum's the senior, for Mr. Slum the senior was dark. Next week the black hair rubbed off, and growed in red, and they changed back, for Eben had red hair. Finally it

was discovered how't the red-haired one was goin' to hev a horrid big mouth, and Miss Slum, junior, *would* change back again And so it kept on.

Finally one turned out so pretty that both insisted he was their'n. That, of course, warn't your Simeon. Then they sot 'em on the floor tu see which they'd creep tu, and decide by that; and then there was a heap o' changin', for they went different every time; and at last whenever one cried very hard, that one's pa would change him, if 'twas the middle o' the night, feelin' sure how't the yellin' one warn't his'n by the natur' o' his feelin' toward it.

Poor Miss Slum, junior, said she couldn't get no rest at nights, it got to be so bad at last.

Well, so it went on when they went to school. If one was ahead o' his class, both mas claimed him. Ef one had the hoopincough, both mas was sartin sure he warn't their'n, and finally they quarreled so that the husbands declared they'd stop it.

So they did, somehow. Some say they turned up a cent, and others agin that they grabbed 'em up in the dark. But any way, at last they took 'em to be christened, and kept 'em after that as they was.

However, I don't believe they really knew, and it's as true as I set here, how't I couldn't tell if I was to die for it whether Simeon Slum is his own uncle or his own nephew.

'Twarn't right o' him not to tell you. But don't look so aw-

ful womblecropt—it's a mercy, seein' he's so humbly, and don't enjoy a good temper, that either would hev him.

Pass the pie, please, and make my tea a bit sweeter, and then if you'll lend me suthin' you may jest souse this gownd intu your suds, for it needs doin' up.

NUMBER TWENTY-EIGHT.

CHARITY DISCOVERS A BURGLAR.

York is a most an awful place. It takes a spell tu find out what the people be. When I fust arrived I used tu be continooally imposed on tu. Hed my pocket picked, gin away silver tu a burgular, and was fur all the world like a poor innercent canary in a garret full o' cats. Howsever, I've gained experience now. And there's one advantage o' bein' o' the years o' approachin' matoority—you dew gain experience. I know how tu judge York human nature the minnit I set eyes on 'em.

These here young men with light kids, and colored neck-ties, and mustaches, and shiny tall hats—them's all pickpockets. And them big fellers with hats on the backs o' their heads, ginerally white ones, and their sleeves pulled up a bit, and nice, fat, white hands—they're card-playin' gambolers. And them young gals with jockeys and men's straw hats—they're female pickpockets. And them middlin'-aged wimmin, dressed up tu kill, are awful critters. And them rough sort o' men with holes in their elbers, and no neck-ties—they're highway burgulars. And the men in white cravats, that you'd take for clergymen—they are impostures. And the little children that come a beg-

gin', are all little thieves; and the heft o' the female help is thieves, and the heft o' the male help, murderers, and all tugether York is a dangerous place.

I consider, how't knowin' this, I can't be took in any more. A proof o' my penetration was in what happened last Wednesday down to Machias Tibbs'. Why, hain't you heerd on't? Du tell! Machias and me went tu school tugether, and he used tu be my little beau—warn't o' an intilectible dispersition, though, and not tu my taste, so't I fur one didn't care when Suke Peters sot her cap fur him and got him. He was afeard tu say he wouldn't hev her, I reckon, fur she was awful humbly, and did the heft o' the courtin' herself. She was a Bosting girl. Well, they stepped off, and made out wonderful. About a couple o' weeks ago I met Machias trottin' up street with a boy by the hand and was so astonished I screeched out.

"Land o' liberty!" sez I. "'Tain't Machias Tibbs?"

"I reckon that's Miss Grinder," sez he.

"It is," sez I. "But I thought you was tu Bosting."

"Sez he, "We've moved down here. Better place foı busiess."

"Getting along?" sez I.

"Wonderful," sez he.

"Miss Tibbs well?" sez I.

"Fat as butter," sez he. "Come and see us."

So I got their number, and went next day tu stay a month.

They lived purty nice. Had four girls and a boy, and kept two helps. First week I was there it all went on nicely, though

I didn't like the looks o' the chambermaid. But the second week, that gal went off one night in Miss Tibbs' best cloak and bunnit and never came back, and the cook was found tipsy down cellar with a barrel o' ale runnin' away and soakin' her, and was turned off. So both gals was gone and Miss Tibbs was obligated to get a couple more.

Sez she, "Will you take keer o' the home while I'm gone, Miss Grinder?" sez she.

"With pleasure," sez I. So off she went to the intelligence office, takin' the boy with her. The gals was at school, so the hull responserbility o' purtectin' the property rested on my shoulders. I had a kind o' a presentiment how't suthin' would happen, and I sez tu myself, Charity Grinder, sez I, whatever tryin' sitavation you air placed in, remember fur tu show how't your courage is equal tu the emergency, and prove yourself an honor tu the female sect.

My sperits was riz by this here resolution, and I sot down tu pass the time by readin' some o' Miss Tibbs' letters, when the bell rings. There was suthin' in that ring that gave me a start. I locked up Miss Tibbs' desk again and went tu the door. There I found a young man waitin'.

Sez he, "Is this here Miss Tibbs?"

"Yes," sez I.

"Own the house?" sez he.

"Yes," sez I.

"What's its value?" sez he.

I told him.

"Has he money in the bank?" sez he.

"Yes," sez I.

"How much?" sez he.

"Dunno," sez I.

And he went on askin' questions and writin' 'em down, until I couldn't think what on airth was the meanin' un't, unless the young man was out o' his mind.

At last, sez he, "Is there a pianner in the house?"

"Yes," sez I, beginnin' tu understand.

Then sez he, "Air there any watches or diamonds?"

Then I knowed for certain.

This here young man a-sittin' in the hall, alone with a unprotected female, in a deserted dwellin', was a burgular.

"Any watches or diamonds?" sez he.

Sez I, arter a minute's consideration:

"Yes, Miss Tibbs has one and so's he, and she's a ring and a pin."

"Any silver?" sez he.

"Spoons, and forks, and other things," sez I.

"Any sewing-machine?" sez he.

"Yes," sez I.

Sez he, "Now what d'ye s'pose the silver is wuth?"

"Well," sez I, "not much."

He looks kind o' doubtful.

Sez I, "Ef you'd like tu see it you could 'udge."

"Very well," sez he.

"Come this way," sez I.

'Twas a kind o' an old-fashioned house, and back o' the stairs was a big clothes-press. Miss Tibbs put winter things in it fur summer.

I opened the door o' this, and sez I:

"The silver is on a shelf in there, ef you'll look in."

In he goes, and that minnit I bangs the door tu, and locks it, and puts the key in my pocket.

"Hullo!" he hollers. "What are you doing, old lady?"

Sez I, "I'm goin' fur the perlice, you wicked wretch you. You thought you'd make a fool o' me, did you? I've lived in York tu long fur that, you abominable larcening burgular."

Then I bolts the door in two places—fur it had bolts as well as keys—and knowed I had him safe. Then I sot out fur a perlice.

I went without so much as puttin' on a bunnit, and jest at the corner who should I meet but Mr. Tibbs. Some business had brung him home.

"Heving has sent you, Mr. Tibbs," sez I.

"Why, what's the matter?" sez he.

Sez I, "Burgulars is in your house!"

"Goodness gracious!" sez he.

"They're locked up in the pantry, and I'm goin' fur the perlice," sez I.

"Goodness gracious!" sez he. "How can I ever thank you, Miss Grinder?"

"No occasion," sez I. "Merit is its own reward. I'm obligated tu ye?"

Sez he, "We'd better make haste. The wretch might escape, or Miss Tibbs might return."

"The house and pantry is both locked," sez I, showin' him the keys.

He squoze my hand.

Well, all this while we were hurryin' on, and at last we came tu the station'us.

Mr. Tibbs rushes in.

"My house is attacked by burgulars," sez he, "and I need assistance." Then he kinder danced about. "Immediately," sez he. "Don't be so long about it. I shall be robbed of everything I possess ef you don't make more haste."

Some o' the perlice stared and didn't say nuthin'; but, finally, a couple came along with us. 'Twas high time, fur when we got there Miss Tibbs was a-standin' on the porch along with the new cook gal.

"Land o' Goshen!" sez she, "what on airth is the matter?"

Sez I, "Be carm, Miss Tibbs; your house is invaded by burgulars."

She clasps her hands.

"Kitch me, Tibbs," sez she, "I'm goin' tu faint."

"I hain't got time," sez he, openin' the door. "Now, perlice, I hope you're well armed, fur no doubt you'll hev trouble."

"Oh, that's him," sez Miss Tibbs; "I hear him now."

And sure enough the burgular was kickin' and yellin' fur tu be let out.

Sez Mr. Tibbs:

"We'll let you out soon enough, my man."

Then he got behind the hall table.

"Du yer duty, perlice," sez he.

And the perlice unlocked the pantry.

Out he pulls the young man, as red as fire, fur it was a'most air-tight in the pantry, with his portfolio under his arm.

"Well," sez one, "you're a pretty fellow, ain't you?"

Sez the other, "Don't make no attempt at resistance, young man, it's useless."

The burgular puffs and pants, and after awhile he gets his breath, and sez he:

"What du you take me fur? Is this here a free country, or is a man tu be molested in the discharge o' his duty?"

"No humbug," sez the perlice. "Come, now, march."

Sez the young man, "Not until I know what I'm arrested fur."

Sez the perlice, "Fur bein' in a gentleman's pantry."

"I wasn't there o' my own free will," sez the young man. "That old critter poked me in and locked me up."

"I glory in it," sez I, "*I did.*"

"Well," sez he, "unless you're crazy I'd like to know what you meant."

"I meant this here," sez I, "I'm from Peekskill, but I've got tu know what York is. It's the awfulest place on airth, and when you came a questionin' me about watches and silver, I wasn't so green as tu let you hev 'em and sheer off. I knowed you was a burgular from the minute I sot eyes on you."

"A what?" sez he.

"A petty larceny, highway burgular," sez I.

"Gracious heavings!" sez he, "I'm a gentleman in the employ o' the eternal revenue. I'm collectin' taxes," sez he. "I hev the proofs in this here book," and he pokes it at the perlice.

"I'm afraid there's a mistake," sez Mr. Tibbs.

"You shall find it more than a mistake, sir," sez the young man.

"What did he do?" asks Mr. Tibbs.

"Asked questions about what you were wuth," sez I, "and who had watches, and what the silver cost; I'll swear tu that."

"He didn't tech nothin', eh?" sez Miss Tibbs.

"Not yit," sez I.

"Gracious goodness! This gentleman was perfectly correct—excusable—ah! that is—I'm really shocked," sez Mr. Tibbs.

"Then you believe he's an eternal revenner, du ye?" sez I.

"Why, *yes*," sez he. "I've no doubt you've been very hasty, Miss Grinder."

Sez I, "You're imposed upon. Don't be took in, but hev him took up."

But, land o' liberty! they didn't listen tu me, but was apologizin' tu the burgular, and finally let him off.

Now Miss Tibbs sez she hopes they won't be taxed double on account o' treatin' the collector so; but she expects to be.

I feel disgusted with 'em. They'd orter hev better sense. I never seen an external revenner; but any one o' intelectability must know how't they wouldn't come askin' about watches, and silver, and that. That young man was a burgular and nothin' else.

NUMBER TWENTY-NINE.

MISS GRINDER PREVENTS A RASH ACT.

A spell ago there come tu the door o' Liberty Ann Bolivar, where I'm at present residin', a boy with tickets for an excursion o' a pious natur' that the Baptist meetin'-us was about tu hev. I've allers had an attendance tu pietude, and when I onderstood how't there was music by the band, and ice cream, and strawberries, and cold turkey, and a openin' address by the Reverend Mister Quail, why, I bought a ticket. Didn't calkerlate at that time how't all the goodies was "extry," and ther warn't nothin' but the address in with the ticket, nor how't they'd rig up a little gal with flowers and ribbons fur tu collect after the band played. But I was besot tu go, and I went.

I put on my yaller muslin, and a blue bunnit, and my red merino shawl, fur fear it should blow up cold, and I calkerlated tu enjoy myself. 'Tain't necessary tu say how't I didn't. Human hopes is futile, especially when they're founded onto promises.

As fur the jaunt, that was well enough, ef it hadn't ben fur the scroudging; but when it come tu eatin'—you was obleeged

tu pay fifty cents fur a snatch at things you couldn't get, arter all, and wouldn't ha' ben worth nuthin' ef you had.

Shouldn't a-had no turkey myself, only when I seen a great, long-armed critter o' a man consumin' the heft o' a turkey, I jest stuck my fork in under his arm and took the third help off his plate.

"Where! What! Who!" he hollers.

"It's only me, Miss Charity Grinder, from Peekskill," sez I, "and I'm goin' tu hev fair play and my dollar's wuth."

As fur doughnuts, I speared them the length o' the table with the sharp eend o' my numberill, and got as many as I wanted. And as fur the hat, I didn't put nuthin' intu that when 'twas handed round. So, considerin' how't the pious portion o' the congregation sot elevatin' their noses, fur tu prove they was better than the rest, and the giddy ones sot tu work makin' fun o' folks, so't a heathen would a blushed tu own 'em fur relationship, the season was tol'rable agreeable.

Of course it rained; but that was tu be expected, fur it allers rains when Sabbady schools goes a junketing. But when you make a p'int o' allers bein' perwided with a numberill, rain ain't o' no pertickler consequence.

Finally we arrived tu the romantic spot where we was tu locate ourselves, and the folks begun tu rush like mad ashore. 'Twas purty damp arter the rain, and brilin' hot overhead, intu the bargain, but the scurtioners didn't appear tu mind that.

As fur me, I pinned up my skirts and put up my numberill, and tried tu sot some o' 'em a-talkin', but they was tu much

afeard o' exhibitin' their ignorance, and wouldn't say nuthin'. So I gin it up and went and sot in a romantic spot by the water, tu eat the doughnuts I'd put in my pocket tu the table.

'Twas a shady grove, and I s'pose there warn't no kind o' bug or insect that warn't there tu get up and down you as you sot on the grass. One long, black critter seemed tu hev a pertickerlar spite at me, but I eended it by stompin' on him. Arter awhile I fell asleep.

I was awakened by a most extraordinary splashin' sound not fur from me, and lookin' up I saw tu my horror a feller-bein' in the act o' attemptin' tu commit feller-de-spree, as the Reverend Mister Parsons, Esquire, used tu call it.

He was up tu his waist in the water, and appeared tu be tryin' to throw hisself on his back. He warn't attired in no great o' garments, but when a feller-bein's life is concerned fillanthrovy is more tu be thunk of than perpriety. I sprung tu my feet, claspin' my hands and castin' my expressive blue eyes tu the sky, and I seemed tu remember how't I'd heerd o' the Humanitary Serciety rewardin' a goold medal tu persons that had saved a feller-bein's life at the sacrifice o' their own. Even if 'twarn't a medal, but a certificate, 'twould be suthin' tu frame and hev hung up in the parlor, sez I, and ef I *kin* I'll save him.

So I rushes down tu the bank, wavin' my numberill, and shrieks at the top o' my voice:

"Come out o' that water short meter! You needn't calkerlate on bein' allowed tu feller-de-spree yourself in the presence

o' a person o' my magnitude o' mind. Ain't you ashamed o' yerself! Come, now—I'm waitin' fur you tu come out!"

He didn't say nuthin', but he retreated further back, so't nuthin' only his head was visible, and there he stopped.

'Twas tu fur tu go in arter him; so, seein' a gentleman in a white cravat on the risin' slope o' a hill, I lifts up my voice and hollers.

"Mister reverend gentleman up there, please tu hurry down," sez I. "It's a case o' life and death."

Down he comes in a hurry.

"Dear, dear!" sez he. "What has happened?"

"Feller-de-spree," sez I.

"Hey?" sez he.

"It's pecooliar that one o' your callin' shouldn't understand langwidge, sir," sez I. "Feller-de-spree means self-susinside."

Sez he, "Ah! I comprehend. But where—who?"

I p'ints tu the head jest appearin' on the water.

"There," sez I. "I've tried my power o' oratic in vain. 'Tain't tu be expected how't *you'll* succeed that way; but you, bein' o' the male sect, might tuck up your trowsaloons and go in and fetch him out."

Sez he, "Yes; but let us try persuasion fust. My friend, don't you know you are duin' very wrong?"

The head answered up quite smart:

"I'm only duin' what others du," sez he.

"Many an onfortunate wretch has done the same," sez the dominy; "but they're a-burnin' on't in brimstun now."

"In which?" sez the susinside.

"In *brimstun*," sez the dominy.

"Well," sez the susinside, "I didn't know there was any law agin it in these parts."

"There air earthly and superior laws," sez the dominy.

"Seein' you ain't a member o' perlice 'tain't *your* affair," sez the susinside.

"Are you comin' out?" sez the dominy.

"No," sez the poor critter.

Sez the dominy, "We'll be obliged tu fetch ye, then."

"Du it, ef you durst," sez the susinside.

Sez the dominy, "Madam——"

"Miss Grinder," sez I.

"Well, Miss Grinder," sez he, "will you obleege me by goin' up tu Elder Snubbs and Deacon Dodge and fetchin' 'em down? Du it without lettin' the rest become aware o' this here unhappy circumstance. I will remain tu watch my feller critter."

Away I fled, and soon I found the company, lookin' ruther low-sperrited, sottin' about on the grass.

"Which is Elder Snubbs?" sez I.

"That's me," sez a gentleman.

"The dominy requested me, Miss Grinder, from Peekskill, tu come and request you tu jine him in prewentin' a feller mortal from committin' feller-de-spree," sez I.

"Heow?" sez the elder.

"By drownin'," sez I. "You and Deacon Dodge is tu come."

"Well," sez he, "I'm a-comin'. Who'd a thunk it? But unpleasantnesses o' this natur' dus allez seem tu arise on picnics. Four chillen was drownded last occasion o' merrymakin', and Mr. Sproozie he broke his arm."

Then he waddled away, and Mr. Dodge, who was a lean, long-favored critter, stalked arter him, wrapped up in a travelin shawl.

The rest o' the picnic, both o' the men and wimmin sect, follered on.

"Now," sez the dominy, when we arrived tu his assistance, "I and this here good lady has both tried our powers o' persuasion onto this person, who seems tu be misguided, ef he ain't deranged, and he insists on continnerin' tu perpetrate his rash act. I've enjoyed a spell o' rheumatics myself, so 'twouldn't be correct fur me tu go arter him, but there's no reason why you shouldn't. Seein' how't ladies is present, you'd better wrap him up in your travelin' shawl, Brother Dodge, afore you fetch him ashore.

So the two walks intu the water, and arter considerable trouble, fotches out the susinside, kivered up, all but his head. I stood ready fur tu ask the direction o' the Humanitary Serciety, and send fur my medal.

They placed him on the bank, and everybody came and looked at him. Then I regret fur tu say he used the awfulest o' perfane langwidge, and called the dominy an old fogy, and wanted tu know why he poked his nose intu what didn't consarn him.

"'Twas my Christian duty," sez the dominy. "And now,

unhappy man, may I ask the reason o' your endeavorin' tu commit this here rash act, and violatin' the laws o' yer creation?"

"The *reason?*" sez the young man. "Well, I dunno. 'Twas partly the warm weather, and partly dirt. I needed a good wash, and I had a holiday; what's more, I'm goin' in when I like, in spite o' all the meddlin' parsons and old wimmin goin'."

Sez the parson, in a kind o' a faint voice, "Wash?"

"Yes, *wash.* Didn't ye never du it?" sez the susinside.

"Young man," sez the dominy, "I beg tu understand clearly —warn't your intention self-destruction?"

"Warn't it suicide?" sez Deacon Dodge.

"Warn't you goin' tu drown yourself?" sez Elder Snubs.

"Drown myself!" sez the young man. "Why, I hadn't such a thought. Like the heft o' persons hereabouts, I'm fond o' takin' a bath. I thought you was objectin' tu it, seein' they've stopped 'em in New York."

"We're all errin' mortals. Allow me to tender my apologies," sez the dominy.

"I don't keer if I take 'em," sez the young man, "seein' you're such a pack o' dough heads. Now ef these here ladies will retire I shill get my clothes. Ef they don't hurry I shill get 'em anyhow."

So the wimmin sect flowed, me along with 'em, and nobody as much as complimented me on my promptitude o' action, but the heft snickered at me and laid the hull blame o' the unforseen eend o' the occurrence tu me.

NUMBER THIRTY.

CHARITY SHOPS FOR AN UMBRELLA.

"Got 'ny numberillas?" Don't I see 'em, eh? Nun o' yer sass, young man, and don't lag there behind the counter, but trot out and show yer goods, ef you've got brains enough. Let's see yer numberillas. What du I want tu give? Land o' liberty —ef ever I heerd? Catch me a-tellin' you how much tu cheat me. What's the price o' this here? Ten dollars? Why, 'tain't no size at all; a mean little short handle, and folds up flat. Hain't got nuthin' fur yer money when ye've took it. That's the present style, eh? Don't tell me; I'm not tu be took in this here way. I'm purtickerler about my numberillas, tu. The last I had I kep' upwards o' ten years. 'Twas a nice one; blue cotton, with a brass top. A young man that's engaged tu be united intu the bonds o' matrimony with a relationship o' mine, he went and lost it tu a matinee'gh. Never gin me another, neither. 'Twas near about bein' lost a spell before by my brother Jonathan. He's a master hand to lose numberillas. He left it behind him tu Peter Squash's folks. They knowed whose 'twas, you bet a dollar; but they jest tucked it away.

One day I met Miss Peter Squash goin' hum in a rain under it; knowed it by its pecooliarities.

"How air you, Miss Squash?" sez I.

"So's tu be crawlin'," sez she.

"La," sez I, "how laden up ye be with a market basket and a tin pail, and a bundle, and that numberill."

Sez she, "Well, I *am* purty fore-handed for lugs, that's a fact."

Sez I, "I'll carry your numberill, Miss Squash."

Sez she, "Thank ye."

So I tuk a hold, and we continued on a spell. Arter awhile, sez I:

"He! he! he! for marsy sakes, this looks like a numberill I lost."

Sez she, "Mebbe 'tis, Miss Grinder; never knowed how I come by it. The help found it behind the kitching door one day."

Sez I, "Jonathan left it som'eres'; probably 'twas there."

"Well," sez she, "guess it was."

I larfed, but I knowed *she* knowed it. Thinks me, "I'll fix her." 'Twas a-pourin' hard, and we'd just come to the fork o' the road, quarter o' a mile from her 'us and quarter o' a mile from our 'us.

Sez I, "Well, here we part."

"So we do," sez she.

Sez I, "Good-by, Miss Squash. I'll take the numberill myself, and not have you troubled in sendin' it; 'bleeged tu ye," and off I marched, takin' it. After she got hum, her best bun-

nit was spiled, and a lot o' sugar in a paper soaked up, and no eend o' mischief done. I ollers felt tu rejice when I think on't, seein' 'twas a judgment onta her fur cunnivin' at the hookin' o' my numberill. No, young man, this here flat, screwed up thing, with no bulge tu it, ain't the kind fur me. Besides, black ain't dressy. How'd I like a brown 'un? Well, no knowin' till I see 'em.

I declare this is jest the shape o' the other. What's the tax—five? an' it are no size at all. Now, Miss Crimps, up hum, has a numberill she sots on. Lor', you know I don't mean actilly, but she sots store by it. It's a kind o' ginghum. Her grand-'ther had it in his youth. She hangs it up in the keepin'-room, and keeps the dusters intu it, and the ironin'-rubbers, and Johnnie's top and marbles, and no eend o' oddsome shortlies. She sez it's as useful as a trunk.

Should think she'd spile it?

Why, lor', no. It improves tne appearance on't mightily. Things in old times was made tu use; now, things only tu sell. Awee up on the top shelf there's one, I think, might soot me. Why, how awful short you be! Seems tu me the Yorkers is a short-legged race. Up tu Peekskill the heft is tall, though ceilin's bein' lower does make a difference. What folks wants tu build 'em in the sky fur, I dunno. It must be a heap o' trouble tu whitewash.

Why, this here is better; longer handled and puffier; more fur yer money. What's the price? There, don't say nuthin'.

Jest stand still a minite. Now the light falls onto you, you look jest like him. Ain't yer name Morgan?

No, it's Brown? La! Now, mebbe your maternelate relationship was o' the name o' Morgan? Jest try tu think.

You must be o' the famerly.

You've got a yaller complectical look. So had they; and you've got a wart ontu yer nose; so hev they some on 'em. And yer inclined tu be scraggy; they air tu. Him that you look most like is Jenkins Morgan. He was the awfulest character I ever knowed. Fust he robbed his boss o' twenty dollars; and then he ran off with the wife o' Jimmenny Pipkin; and arter that he embezzled suthin', and was sent tu Sing Sing for't; finally, 'twas heerd how't he was hung. When you go hum ask yer ma whether Jenkins Morgan warn't a relationship, and tell her what you've heerd consarnin' him. She'il feel tu be interested. There—a-hangin' up ontu a hook is the thing what appears the nearest tu my idees o' a numberill. Fetch it down. Green! Well, green is a nice color—good fur the eyes, tu, they say. What's the charge? Well, fur say tew-and-a-half. I won't pay no sech a price. I ain't tu be taken in. Calkerlate I won't be suited. Well, here I sot till I be. I'm goin' o' a journey, and there's no tellin' how useful numberills is at sech times.

You put 'em up ef it rains and tu keep orf the sun—and you can hook conductors with 'em—and pull the check strings, and poke folks you want tu speak tu. Then getting through a crowd you kin make your way better'n by scrougin', fur numberills hurt worse'n elbers, and if any one was tu durst insult ye by

speakin' tu ye—and the York men sect is horrid that way—you could thump 'em. And they're splendid fur bad boys, and meddlin' children, and dogs, and I have heerd o' frightenin' mad bulls by openin' it in ther faces suddent.

Let's see, I've seen blue numberills, and green, and brown, and black, but I never seen a red 'un. Them that makes 'em knows how't folks couldn't hook 'em ef they was pecooliar colors, and 'twould spile their trade. The heft o' numberills is stole ye know.

What *I* call a good 'un don't never wear out. Things comes off on't—the handle, the fastenin', the top, and a wire or two; but the body on't is everlastin'. Wonder who has got mine. Some o' the fash'nable Yorkers I spect, that gets hold o' things any way they kin, honest or not. I've looked out fur it up Broadway every time since I lost it. I borryed one myself. This here is Samanthy Grigg's helps that I've got with me. She don't never use it only fur rain. Got a hity-tity pink thing, with beads, fur the sun. No handle nearly. Reaches her arm up so's her elber is right angles o' her nose, and hists it before one eye; t'other has tu wink, cause it ain't shaded. You've got beaded ones. Well I reckon you have, but I ain't a-goin' to hist one and look like a tamborine gal follerin' a monkey and organ. Du tell, let's look, though; might as well see what's goin', and know what folks be in York.

That thing with the gilt glass ball for a handle beats me all holler, and the one with tassels would give a duck fits. S'pose

I was tu climb up and take down what I liked, I'd get along better; wouldn't I? Oh! well, if ye don't like it *I* don't keer; you can wait on me. Fetch 'em along till I'm suited. Stop now, while I think on't; you hain't seen nuthin' o' a man that mends numberills, hev ye? A stumpy kind o' a man, with a wart on his chin, and yallerish eyes, wears a white hat with a dent in it, and has a nose of most an awful dimension, and a green coat, and a bundle, a numberill, and stubbed-toed shoes, and answers to the name o' Moses. Seein' you was o' the same trade, thought I'd ask. No connection with such common people? Well, I dunno much difference between mendin' 'em and makin' 'em, and sellin' 'em; so ye needn't stick up your nose. Is Mr. Moses a relationship o' *mine?* I vow tu man. Well, I declare—of course not. He come tu Miss Colonel Washman that keeps a tavern to Peekskill, and, sez he, "I'm a gentleman in distressed circumstances," sez he, "and obleeged tu mend these here for a livin'. 'Tain't what I'm used tu," sez he, "but I'll do it cheap," sez he. "I'll mend all you'll fetch fur my night's lodgin'." Well, she had a lot needed fixin', and she fetched 'em in. He worked away like all possessed, and at night they gin him the attic. He pertended fur tu be exhausted with his walk and his work, and snored horrid till the rest was asleep. Then he must a-got up and opened Miss Washman's desk, and took up'ards o' nineteen dollars in money, and a watch, and arterwards he took a silver tea-pot she sot on, and a gownd she wore a Sabber-days, and scooted. It did make her hoppin' mad—no wonder, and they hain't never tetched him tu

ketch yet. He left all his old numberills, and them he mended came tu pieces right off agin.

Your boss is out, ain't he? Now, what does he look like? Is his eyes yallerish—and has he got a nose on his chin? Now, you own up ef he has, fur 'twould du me good tu ketch the critter, and send word tu Miss Washman I'd done it. The perprieter is your pa? Well, there's no reason o' his not bein' him ef he is. Of course you'd hide it, though. I shouldn't reflect onto you, and I'd buy the numberill all the same, ef it was cheap.

There, now, them white ones. They ain't intended for ladies' use. Hand 'em over. Why, they're fust-rate. Hain't a doubt they'll wear. The handle is most as long as I be, and ferule measures a quarter o' a yard, plump. Strong and handsome; reckon you kept 'em fur some that you thought great folks. I've cut my eye teeth, and lost 'em, tu, and can't be cheated. They're meant for stage-drivers and cartmen; well, they're good judges, no doubt, they're out o' doors so much; I'll take this here; it's a most an awful price, but it'll last a life-time, and ef it's hooked I'll know it a mile off; and ef I *should* acceed tu the inducements o' them that's anxious fur me tu except their intentions, why, it's a reg'lar family numberill. It's worth suthin'. How mean them flat-foldin' silk rag looks alongside on't.

Well, good-by. Ask yer man about the name o' Morgan; and take notice o' anybody o' the description o' Mr. Moses that visits yer pa, or comes on business. And next time you get a good customer don't keep back the best o' the goods so long.

NUMBER THIRTY-ONE.

MISS GRINDER IS IMPOSED UPON.

Well, I dunno, Arminty; fur my part I haven't no confidence in auctions. As a general thing I think yer apt tu be deceived, and took in, no matter how much o' sagacity o' mind you may hev by nature. Fact o' the matter is such a gift o' the gab is purty hard tu keep up with. The hearin' don't travel as fast as the sound, which was how a scientifical lecterer, that come tu Peekskill onct, ef I don't disremember, accounted for thunder and lightnin'.

Don't remember the Rev. Mr. Thumper, du ye? He preached fur us up there a spell. He was extremely impressin' in his manner. Deacon Plunket said he looked precisely like St. Paul. Dunno how he knew how he looked, but perhaps he'd seen his daggertype. Deacon Plunket has traveled a good deal. Been tu Australy, and that, ef I remember, is handy tu Palestine, where I calkerlate Saint Paul lived considerable, and arter Cousin Jones died we found more'n twenty daggertypes round among his things, so prob'ly it might hev been the same with Paul.

And that fetches me tu picturs, and, arter all, picturs is my subject.

You see the congregation was extremely took up with Mr. Thumper (while it lasted), and about Christmas time it was considered appropriate fur tu donate him a token o' esteem. There was a private meetin' tu Joel Burdock's house, fur tu decide what it had orter be. Deacon Plunket was the first tu speak.

Sez he, "Brothern and sistern: We've met tugether fur a pecooliarly pleasant reason. Near as I can calkerlate we've collected about a hundred dollars, and the objeck is tu donate a Christmas gift to our pastor. Now, the question is, what shall it be?"

Up jumps Mr. Burdock. Sez he, "Beg pardon fur interruptin', but ef the cheer will permit, I beg tu remark how't we hain't took the report o' the committee."

You see Mr. Burdock had given considerable, and wanted it knowed.

"Very true," sez Deacon Plunket. "Now, Mr. Peach, you're secretary, you go ahead and read out the report."

Up jumps Mr. Peach. Sez he, "Ladies and gentlemen——"

Sez Mr. Burdock, "You ain't tu make a speech. Your juty is tu read the reports."

"Lor'," sez Mr. Peach, "I was only a-sayin' how't I was about tu read 'em."

"Very well," sez Mr. Burdock, "go ahead."

"The committee appointed fur tu collect," sez Mr. Peach, "has succeeded beyond their ex-

pectations. 'Twas owin', as I calkerlate, on their bein' all ladies. The heft o' ladies has a overpowerin' influence on the hearts o' the men sect. When they're young and beautiful their charms does it, and when they're middlin'-aged it's by a kind o' moral swashun——"

"That's jawin', ain't it?" sez Captain Kornkob. "Ef, not understandin' Latin, I kin ask the cheer, don't that mean jawin'?"

"*Sartingly not,*" sez Mr. Peach, who is studyin' fur a lawyer. "It's a power o' touchin' the tenderest feelin's o' the soul."

"Thank ye, sir," sez the captain, and sot down, grinnin'.

"Tu perceed with the report," sez Mr. Peach. "Miss Griggs, Mrs. Chowder, and Miss Winkle were the committee. Miss Griggs handed in this here: Mr. Burdock, fifteen dollars."

Every one stared at Mr. Burdock, and he looked sot up.

"Mr. Veal, the butcher, five."

Mr. Veal coughed.

"Mrs. Sammerskin, two; Mr. Chubbs, three; Mr. Charles, one. Makin' twenty-six fur Miss Griggs."

"Very nice fur Miss Griggs."

"Mrs. Chowder," sez Mr. Peach, "reports eight dollars from Mr. Grump—the eend o' her collectin'; but it proved her zeal. Mr. Grump ain't much o' a hand tu give, bein' somewhat near, and he hain't no interest into church, never goin' tu one, and bein' an enemy o' Mr. Thumper on account o' his boys stealin' his tomaterses. But Mrs. Chowder went, and knocked, and thumped, and kept at it, on the principle o' hevin' it opened at

last, and then when she got in and didn't get nuthin', she kept a-goin', and stayed tu tea with no invite—and that was costin' more in the eend to Mr. Grump—so he paid her, like they du the organ-grinders down in York, not tu come no more. She's got eight dollars by it.

"Mrs. Winkle has a lengthy report. She went among the poorer classes:

"Twenty-five cents from John Hubbs, chimbly sweep

"Twenty-five from Ann Dolan, help.

"Twenty-five from a colored gal, name unknownst. Told her she wouldn't be apt tu go tu heaven unless she give it.

"Twenty-five from Timothy Trot.

"Half a dollar from old Mrs. Chubbs. She was savin' up tu buy a blanket. Told her prob'ly the Lord would perwide, and 'twas wicked tu be hoardin'.

"Half a dollar in pennies from Jane Chuff, seamstress. Said how't she was savin' not tu be in the poor'us.

"'Jane,' sez I, 'du you remember the parable o' the talents? That applies tu your case.'

"'How?' sez she.

"'Well,' sez I, 'you are puttin' 'em away in an old stockin', and that's as bad as buryin' 'em,' sez I. 'Hand over suthin', Jane.'

"And she done it.

"There's zeal fur ye, sez Captain Kornkob, grinnin', 'cause he was pleased I reckon."

"Met a little girl goin' for 'lasses for her ma," goes on Mr. Peach. "Said, 'What have you there, my little dear?'

"Sez she, 'Ten pennies, ma'am.'

"Sez I, 'Will you not contribute 'em tu a good cause?'

"Sez she, 'They're ma's.'

"Sez I, 'Your ma will rejoice fur tu be permitted——'

"She holds on tight.

"'We ain't got no butter,' sez she, 'and the bread is like chips.'

"'No matter,' sez I. 'Tell your ma she has bought better than 'lasses with it.' Name o' Timkins—back cellar o' the tobacconist."

And so he continnered, until what Miss Chowder got amounted tu a hundred dollars, put along o' the rest.

"Now," sez Deacon Plunket, "what shill the gift be? Downing has everything necessary. He's forehanded o' comforts; this here must appeal tu the taste—must be a article o' adornment. They've all got watches, and rings, and pins. Last year we collected a silver tea-service. Now, what du you say tu a fine pictur?"

"Good idee," sez one.

"A hundred dollars," sez the deacon, "orter recompense the fust o' artists for the best pictur. Perhaps," sez he, "we might get a old master. Old masters is highly prized. A religious subject would be appropriate, and some persons o' combined talent in arts and economy ought tu be app'inted tu choose."

Up riz Captain Higgins o' the public house. "Beg parding," sez he, "but my sister Samanthy is a reg'lar artist. Done a piece in theorems tu school, and a head in colored chalks, under a teacher. I move she be app'inted."

"Good," sez the deacon, and they voted Samanthy in. The only other person o' artistic debility was me. I purposed myself, and was choose.

Ther was tu be an auction o' waluable picturs belongin' tu a departed gentleman, at a residence called Tooker's Bliss, up on a hill, and there we went tu look one up, goin' in afore folks had come.

The auctioneer was there. He nods. I walks up tu him. Sez I, "Sir, we're a couple o' ladies o' artistic debility, app'inted fur tu select a pictur o' a religious tendency, fur tu donate a gift tu the Reverend Mr. Thumper, Esquire. Will any o' that natur be bid off?"

He thinks, and sez he, "Yes'm—one."

"What is it?" sez I.

"'Eve givin' Abel his supper,'" sez he.

"Let's see it," sez I.

Well, there it was, as big as all out-doors. Eve was settin' on the grass, under a tree, with nuthin' on only a red scarf; and there was the beautifullest tree overhead, and no eend o' doves about; and Abel he was perched on a barrel, drinking out o' a splendiferous chany mug, with the most elegantest o wreaths on his head, o' grape-vine leaves, and a bunch o' grapes in his t'other hand; and he was as fat as butter, and his cheeks like pinys.

"Lor'," sez Miss Samanthy, "it's elegant; but they hain't nuthin' on tu speak of."

Sez he, "Bible picturs never has. Cotton was scarcer in the year one than in the year sixty-five."

"Ther hadn't been no war," sez she.

"No," sez he. "But you couldn't expect nobody tu work niggers and run a mill only for Adam and Eve."

"That's true," sez she.

"Observe," sez he—oh, the sarpint!—"Observe the cherubic amiability o' Abel, and the affection o' his glances at his ma. Thus we was intended fur tu smile, the hull on us. See how modest and blushin' Eve is. Don't need no words tu indicate that. The fust o' women, in course, was sich. Why, your dominy will be inspirated by that ere pictur fur no eend o' sermons, I hain't a doubt. There's purity o' the furst inhabitants o' arth afore they had eat the apple. That ther in Eve's hand ain't one o' the forbidden—it's a golden pippin. It's all innocence as yet. Why, your pastor 'ud never be the man without that he'd be with that work o' art. Besides, it's an old master, painted in Rome, nine thousand years or more ago, by Reubens, and copied by a lady o' taste, and from that copied by a German gentleman o' talent, so't you've got high art and an old master fresh done up, as red and yaller as at first, a regular improvement on the original, and varnished until you kin see yer face in it. A durable article o' high art, that can't wear out. Now, that'll sell for five hundred when it's put up.

"We've only got one hundred," sez I.

"Well," sez he, "I'm not forbid tu sell privately, and as it's a scriptur' piece for a minister, take it at once, and you may have it for a hundred. Here you go and there you go. One hundred dollars for high art o' a scriptur' natur', 'Eve givin' Abel his supper,' by Reubens."

So we bought it, and it was sent tu Miss Samanthy's tu be kept until Christmas Eve.

Then we all assembled tu the parsonage, and hired Jim Black and his boy tu fetch it over.

The hull congregation was sottin' in the parlors, the minister and his wife in the middle, and the children in a row on the sofa, when they bumps at the door.

"What hev we here?" sez the minister. "Ah, ha! what hev we here?" and in it comes, all done up in black musling.

Mr. Peach hops up.

Sez he, "Respected dominy and family, and the rest o' the folks: The congregation o' this here church bein' desirous fur tu present you with a token o' our esteem, has gone and purchased a work o' art o' a religious attendancy, fur tu adorn the walls o' your parsonage. It air an aged master representin' Eve, the first ma, givin' her son Abel his tea. Jim, remove the kiver."

Jim done it, and the dominy began:

"My surprise perwents——"

There he stopped. He flung up his hand, and rolled up his eyes, and yells he:

"Send the children out o' the room, Mrs. Thumper. Ladies, put up yer handkerchers until we turn the pictur round. Oh,

my friends, some sarpent has deceived you! This here," sez he, "is not Eve engaged in the maternal duties o' feedin' her son Abel, but *Venus and Bacchus.*"

Then he sot tu and turned the pictur round. I riz.

Sez I, "I hev the bill here. 'For Eve giving Abel his supper, $100.'"

Sez he, "My good, kind friends, you are imposed upon."

Miss Thumper wrung her hands.

Sez I, "Gracious! who was they?—du tell who they was?"

Sez he, "Heathen deities."

Sez I, "Miss Thumper, du explain."

Sez she, "Ladies, come tu my room and I will."

So we went.

Sez she, "It ain't none o' yer faults, but the purson that sold it. Bacchus was always tipsy, and Venus warn't one bit better than she should be."

Then me and Miss Samanthy went intu highstrikes.

The minister took it intu prayerful consideration what he ought tu du with it, and concluded how't the tavern-keeper, bein' depraved a'ready, couldn't be hurt by it; so he offered tu sell it tu him. He paid ten dollars for it, and it hangs over the bar, they say, tu this day, though o' course I hain't never seen it.

And my opinion o' auctioneers is, that they're a degenerated race o' men, that don't keer what they say so long as things is sold; for any one that would impose on such a thing as a committee o' ladies o' artistic debility, about tu donate a gift tu ther pastor, wouldn't stop at nuthin'.

NUMBER THIRTY-TWO.

MISS GRINDER'S THERMOMETER IS TAMPERED WITH.

Ef I know'd how amazin' hot a climate York was, I'd never ha' left Peekskill.

Disagreeable as Jonathan's conduct has made it fur me ther, I'd hev staid. I don't believe one word o' what they say about its bein' unusual. They only du it fur tu keep strangers here and get their custom.

As near as I can remember, the thermometer was a thousand and four below zero, which is bilin' p'int, ye know, the last hottest day, and it ain't no wonder ther was so much immortality in the city.

I noticed in the *Herald* tew columns o' habeus corpus, and only one birth. It seemed singular in such a great city, and that one o' English nativity. London papers please copy.

It's dreadful weather, but it takes appetites away, and so the boarding-house folks likes it. Though I make a p'nt o' eatin' all I kin, out o' spite.

Yes, the thermometer was horrid; and that puts me in mind o' a mysterious circums ance connected with one I had a number o' years ago, when I was quite a gal.

I had a cousin by the name o' Christina Clipper, that married a gentleman o' the name o' Wogginwalker, and went tu Canady. Arter she got ther, she used tu write how amazin' cold it was. Now, I'm a favorite o' cold weather; it makes ye spry. So I wrote back that I'd change with her ef I could, fur it was altogether tu warm in Peekskill. She writ back it was ollers a purty comfortable climate, so far as she knew, and so we kept it up, kinder in fun, fur a year or tew.

At last it so happened that a gal o' Irish distraction, by the name o' Molly Murphy, that was a-livin' in our place, heerd o' some relationship o' her'n that had gone tu Canady, and was besot tu go. She was a ra-al smart help, and seein' as Miss Wogginwalker lived in the town with her relationships, and was always wantin' help, I sez tu Molly:

"Now, I shouldn't wonder ef she'd hire ye; anyway, I'll give ye a recommend," and she was tickled tu death tu hev it.

"Only," sez she tu me, "I'm afeard o' the cold weather. They say it's a mighty freezin' place up there in winter."

That jest reminded me how't Miss Wogginwalker and me was always arguin' about the climates, and sez I:

"I'll send her the weather jest as it is here, and show her."

It was the eend o' August, and amazin' warm.

"Now," sez I to Molly, "Ther's suthin' you must du for me."

Sez she, "What is it?"

"Well," sez I, "Miss Wogginwalker won't believe how't it's hotter here than it is cold in Canady, and I'm goin' tu get a

thermometer and catch the heat at its wurst, and you shall take it in your trunk tu her."

She sez, "Willin' and glad tu oblige."

So, when Molly was packin' up, I set out tu the drug store.

"Mister," sez I, "hev you such a thing as a thermometer?"

"We hev an assortment," sez he.

Sez I, "I want a good one, that'll go up purty high, and retain the heat."

"Well," sez he, "these will all show the state o' the tempertoor."

Sez I, "Will it last until it gets tu Canady?"

Sez he, "With keer it might last a life-time."

So I picked one out.

Sez I, "Now, how du ye get the highest heat?"

"Put it in the warmest place," sez he.

"Thank ye," sez I; and axed him what he taxed, and went away hum.

Molly started next arternoon, and I made up my mind not tu heat it up until jest before she left, fur fear it should chill.

Land o' liberty! how provoked I was. The next day was kinder cloudy and cool.

I put the thermometer outside the door, but it didn't rise up nohow tu speak of, and I sent Molly up tu the roof, and du what she would, 'twouldn't go up more'n eighty-nine.

At last a thought struck me. 'Twas bakin' day, and the oven was red hot. I poked my gentleman in there, and the silver stuff flowed straight tu the top. I forget the number, but I know 'twas the highest down.

"I wish I'd got a longer one," sez I; "dunno where it might hev riz. But run, now, Molly, and get a piece o' red flanning from the rag-bag, and let's wrap it well up, and mind you don't tell Miss Wogginwalker about the oven. Tell her the tempertoor o' Peekskill, this summer, is precisely that what she sees marked down."

Well, Molly promised, and fetched the flanning, and we put the thing in between a quilt o' hern and a wool shawl, and I had tu laugh tu think how I'd fixed Miss Wogginwalker.

I'd told Molly tu write jest how she took it, and in October I got a letter. I'll jest show it tu ye:

"CANADY, October 10th.

"MISS GRINDER—MA'AM: This comes tu let ye know that I'm enjoyin' the blessin' iv health, and hope ye air the same.

"It's a mis'rable cowld climit we're havin'. Ye'd think 'twas winter a'ready, and my Cousin Pater is married, and my Uncle Daniel tuck tu dhrink, and by the Lord's blessin' I'll be back agin tu Christian lands afore I'm much oulder. The place is good, and the lady as well as most ladies is; but, for all that, the male survents is French tu the man, an' sorra a wan o' me 'ud marry a foreigner. It would be a purty thing fur tu find it unpossible tu have a bit o' discoors with your own husband, and if the children took after their father, divil a word they spoke could ye ondersthand. Catch me settlin' here.

"But, now, I've niver said a word consarnin' the tempertoor I took along 'with me. Sure, Miss Grinder, me dear lady, I grave tu tell ye the same, but some meddlesome craythur must have tampered with the thermometer. Sure as me sowl's me own, I kep' it safe just where ye put it until I came tu Miss

Wogginwalker's, who engaged me at onct, for her last survent was married tu a gentleman o' the French persuasion a week before. More betoken, he's murdhered her a'ready, out o' jealousy, and save us from a foreign husband, and amen!

"I took my things tu the house, and thin I got the thermometer, and, as I hope, I never unwrapped the flanning, but kep' it over it in my hand, and goes into the parlor to Miss Wogginwalker.

"Says I, 'Miss Wogginwalker, ma'am—Miss Grinder sends her compliments, and says you and she hevin' hed some differs o' opinion about the tempertoor o' Peekskill, she's cocht it in the thermometer and sent it fur ye to see.'

"'Hey?' sez she.

"'Here it is, ma'am,' sez I, and I off the flanning, and, the saints purtect us! it was down tu a third o' where it was when I started.

"Sez I, 'Somebody has tampered with it, and altered it,' and sorry I am tu tell you the truth, but so it was.

"Ye bid me tell ye how she took it. Faith, she's plazed as Punch, not tu have it proved on her. You was right in the argyment; wheniver the thermometer is alluded to, she laughs until you'd think she'd die; though where the fun is, I can't see.

"Du you think, ma'am, she could have got it out me thrunk and althered it?

"Yours, with respex, MOLLY MURPHY."

And tu this day I've never been able tu find out who tampered with my thermometer. Shouldn't wonder ef 'twas Miss Wogginwalker.

NUMBER THIRTY-THREE.

CHARITY GOES TO THE CENTRAL PARK.

Ef I live a thousand years, you won't catch me tu the Central Park agin. York is a mean place, take it in the lump, but this here Park is the meanest p'int in it.

Ever sence I come, I've heard 'em talk on't as ef ther weren't no other place nowhere tu come up tu it, and I've kep' sayin' I'd go, and puttin' on't off. The heft o' my friends and relationships was tu busy tu go along o' me when I suggested on't.

I dunno us ever I should hev started, ef the Blinksops hadn't come down from Peekskill on a visit. Minute I heerd they was tu the'ir Cousin Clupper's I went over and took tea; and while we was havin' it, Miss Blinksop sez:

"Fust thing I'm goin' tu see is this here Central Park."

"Well," sez I, "I hain't been there yet; so s'pose we make a picnic on't?"

Sez she, "That'll be a good idee."

So, last Friday we sot out—dunno where our heads was tu choose such an unlucky day.

There was me and Miss Blinksop, and him and Aunt Pepper, and the five children; and each o' the adulterates o' the party

had a basket. We had ham, and biled eggs, and custards, and pies, and cake, and root beer; and Miss Pepper she took along a couple o' blanket-shawls, fur fear it should blow up cold fur the baby and Amazonia, the eldest gal, who is a hand fur hevin' chills.

We got intu a Eighth aveny car, and took the children ontu our laps.

Up comes the conductor.

"What's the taxes?" sez Mr. Blinksop.

Sez he, "Four growed people and five children—full price fur the three biggest, and three cents fur the smallest."

Sez Mr. Blinksop, "Sha'n't pay nuthin' fur the young 'uns."

Sez I, "No, indeed—don't you go and du any sich green thing, Mr. Blinksop."

Sez the conductor, "You'll get off, then."

Sez we, "We sha'n't."

Finally we compermised, and paid half price fur all the young 'uns. 'Twas an awful fib, though, tu say Amazonia warn't only nine and a half, fur she's goin' on thirteen.

We rid along a spell quite comfortable. Then there come a reg'lar squash o' folks intu the car, and 'twas all we could do tu keep our baskets from bein' oversot, and the young 'uns murdered; and one very interestin' young man sot aside Mr. Blinksop, and entered intu conversation with him. Said 'twas perfectly nefarious o' the company not tu run more cars, and hoped he didn't incommodate nobody.

Mr. Blinksop said "Not at all," and interduced the subjict of

theology, which is his favorite, and wanted tu know what the young man thought o' predestination. He said the way he answered was a example tu the heft o' young men, by which I conclude he thought, like Mr. Blinksop, about everybody, exceptin' them he was relationshiped with, bein' in a bad way.

'Twas as agreeable a season, Mr. Blinksop said, as ever he spent.

We had tu part at the park, though, and all the children, only Amazonia, was sound asleep by that time, so 'twas with considerbul difficul'y that we waked 'em up. Mr. Blinksop lugged the baby and the biggest basket. I took Aunt Pepper under my new numberill, and we meandered over the path, admirin' o' the pictereskew scenery. Arter a while we cum tu a green meader like velvet, and sez Miss Blinksop:

"Now, why not picnic here?"

Sez I, "No better place."

So the children bein' starved, and the rest o' us tuckered out, we opened the baskets, spread a table-cloth, set out the pervisions, and sot down.

Mr. Blinksop asked a blessin', and then carved the ham.

"Hev a slice, Miss Grinder?" sez he, and I was jest holdin' my plate, when along comes a purson in gray clothes and white gloves.

"Hullo!" sez he; "come out o' that!"

"Hey?" sez Mr. Blinksop.

"Come off that grass," sez he.

"Why?" sez Mr. Blinksop.

"Agin the rules," sez he.

"Can't ye jest mitigate 'em fur once?" sez Mr. Blinksop. "The children is purty sharp fur their grub. I'll give ye a quarter ef ye'll jest say nuthin'."

"Come off that *grass!*" roars the man.

So we picked up and started, the young 'uns roarin'.

We roamed about a spell, and at last we obsarved a kind o' a summer-house. 'Twas painted blue, and had seats inside, and steps leadin' up tu it. Sez Mr. Blinksop, "There's the spot;" and up we went. 'Twas delightful, and we got out our lunch again and sot by.

This time we had fairly begun tu eat when up comes another man dressed in gray, with white gloves.

"Ef ever I see the like!" sez he. "You come down short meter."

"Oh, law!" sez Miss Blinksop. "Is this here wrong, tu?"

"Be sure it is," sez the man. "That ther is the pavilion fur music; and I've seen impidence before, but never the beat o' this."

Sez I, "We'll be through in half an hour; can't ye wait?"

"No," sez he. "I'll walk the whole bilin' o' ye off and lock ye up ef ye don't skedaddle."

So down we come. We was purty miserable by this time; but arter a while we found an arbor and was allowed to finish there. The rice puddin' was sour, and the custard had wobbled over, and some how another one o' those tobacker worms had got intu the pickles, and Mr. Blinksop come near eatin' him by mistake, he looked so much like a cowcumber. Mebbe he would hev hed a bite only Amazonia hollers:

"Pa, your cowcumber has got horns and eyes," and arrested on him arter 'twas on his fork.

What was sour we pitched intu the grass, and feelin' refreshed continered our meandering.

We came to several tombstones, one on 'em tu the memory o' one Mr. S. C. Hiller with his head a-top on't. I asked Mr. Blinksop who he was, and he said he reckoned he'd invented suthin'. Soon arter we arrived tu the flower garding. I had an empty basket along, and sez I:

"Now, I tell you what, Mr. Blinksop, the lady I'm residin' with is anxious fur tu hev a garding, and I'm goin' tu take some slips and roots hum."

"I'm goin' tu hev a boky," sez she.

So I borrers Mr. Blinksop's knife, and she gets out her scissors, and tu work we goes.

I had a lot o' petunys, and a dozen head o' dew plant, and some rose-slips, when there was the awfullest yellin', and up rushes two other men in gray, wavin' their white gloves like mad.

"What du you mean by this?" sez one.

"Lor'," sez I, "I'm only takin' a few o' these here flowers hum."

"Air you crazy?" sez he.

"Air *you*?" sez I.

He catches up the basket and begun stickin' the roots back, and the other grabs me. I yelled murder.

"I'll arrest you," sez he.

Sez Mr. Blinksop, "Now don't ye—there's a good man. I

wouldn't hev done it; and women folks tricks ain't o' no account. The Lord ain't gin 'em no great amount o' mind, and we'd orter feel tu pity 'em."

The man groaned.

Sez he, "Won't you meddle with nuthin' more?"

Sez I, "No; keep your old flowers, who keers?"

Then he took away Miss Blinksop's posy, and we got shet o' him.

Miss Blinksop wept.

"Don't," sez I. "These here myrmydons o' power allers does take airs when they get a chance. No doubt they're a parsel o' upstarts. Don't you mind 'em."

Then we meandered on.

Arter a while we come tu a bridge overlookin' the water. There was boats sailin' about, and we admired the scene amazin'. Amazonia she climbed up, and peeked over.

There never was such a pesky gal, I du believe. Miss Blinksop sez as sure as she goes anywhere she gets intu some mischief. This time she lost her balance, and pitched intu the water head over heels.

We all screamed, and up run a couple more o' the people in gray, got out a boat, and reskied her.

She warn't drowned, but the minute she come out she took a chill out o' spite, and 'twas a mercy Miss Pepper had fetched along the blanket-shawl.

We wrapped her up, and then ther wern't nuthin' fur it but tu go hum.

Seemed as ef we shouldn't never find the right gate; but we did at last, and then sez Mr. Blinksop:

"I'll jest see how't the fare is handy afore we get in," and put his hand in his pocket.

"Land o' liberty!" sez he.

"What *is* it?" sez Miss Blinksop.

"It's gone!" sez he.

"What?" sez she.

"My purse!" sez he, "and my specs, and my handkercher, and the medal o' the Agricultural Serciety, that they gin me for the biggest pumpkin."

"Who took it?" sez she.

"Well," sez he, "I'm afeared 'twas the pious young man that I had a delightful season o' conversation with in the cars. Shouldn't wonder ef he was an imposture. Don't believe his uncle was an elder, and calkerlate he didn't care no more about predestination than his old shoe."

"What a wicked place York is?" sez I.

"I'm goin' hum to-morrow," sez Miss Blinksop; and so they did; but that arternoon ther warn't nobody had no change about 'em, and we had tu foot it, luggin' the young 'uns and the baskets. At least the rest did; I only carried my numberill.

As fur the park, my belief is 'twas constituted fur the purpose o' aggravatin' folks. You can't du nuthin' you like, and you can't go nowhere you choose; and as fur paths, all the good they air is tu give them men in gray a chance tu order ye off 'em. No power on airth will ever get me there agin, as sure as my name is Miss Charity Grinder.

NUMBER THIRTY-FOUR.

CHARITY PERFORMS THE PART OF DUENNA.

It warn't my fault. Nobody could lay it tu me that was in the seven senses; but if Miss Wickum chooses tu du it, let her. I alludes it tu her ignorance and despises her. She and me is first cousins twict removed by marriage.

We hain't been over intimate o' late years on account o' her residin' in a permiscus way in different countries, Mr. Wickum bein' a cappen o' a ship, and she allers insistin' on goin' with him.

"Why du you du it, Samanthy?" I've often said tu her, and sez she:

"Land o' liberty! ef you knowed seafarin' men like *I* du, you wouldn't ask. I ain't goin' tu have the cappen committin' burglary by unitin' in the bonds o' matermony with no eend o' wives so long as I can prevent it."

So she used tu go along o' him until he retired on a handsome property for good. By that time Neptuny had about growed up. She was their only gal. Ef she'd been a boy the cappen was sot on namin' her Neptune, and bein' o' the gal sect he come as near tu it as he could. They'd kep' her at boardin'-school until

she knowed enough, and now they fetched her hum. When I called on 'em I couldn't think o' nothin' but the way she was rigged out. Never seen so much handsome clothes on one gal at a time in my life.

Miss Wickum was dressed, tu—yaller and blue head-dress, and red striped cashmere dress, and purpled-stoned breastpin, and a green belt, and bracelets, and ear-rings, and there warn't no color o' the rainbow she hadn't intu her parlor. About as genteel a house as ever I had the pleasure o' visitin' tu.

Miss Wickum was pleased tu see me, and made me stay a week. And the cappen he was sociable, tu; but Neptuny *she* took airs. She thought herself tu grand tu talk tu anybody but some hity-tity, highflyin' gals that had been tu school with her, and made herself perfectly ridiculous. Not keerin' for her airs, I called whenever I felt like it, and me and Miss Wickum enjoyed ourselves amazin'.

One day she come over tu where I was stayin', airly in the mornin', and sez she:

"Charity, I've come tu ask a favor."

"Go ahead," sez I.

Sez she, "Me and the cappen is a-goin' tu see his relatives, and we ain't a-goin' tu take Neptuny. One o' the reasons is she won't go, and the other she sassed her Aunt Dolphin so last time she was on that she wouldn't have her come ef she would. We're goin' tu leave her hum, and I want you tu stay there and keep an eye onto her."

"Ain't she old enough to take keer o' herself? sez I. "Air you afeard she'll tumble intu the fire?"

"No," sez she. "The trouble *is* she's *tew old.* She's sot on gettin' married, and she has no eend tu beaus, and they all know she'll hev plenty o' money, and the cappen he's determined she sha'n't hev nobody he don't approve of, and the only one he does approve of is his fust mate that used tu be, Cappen Gun that is. He's risin' forty, and purty stout, and Neptuny is so morantic she don't take no shine tu him on them accounts. What me and the cappen desires is fur her tu be kept from hevin' any beaus about while we're gone, and the cappen would find it a pleasure, as well as a dooty, for tu donate you a handsome present for your keer o' her ef everything turns out well."

Sez I, "I'm sure I'm happy tu obleege."

And over I went next day.

Captain Wickum and her was jest startin'. Neptuny was in the sulks.

Sez Miss Wickum, "Mind you entertain Miss Grinder nicely, Neptuny, sence she's so good as tu keep you company."

Sez Neptuny, "Fur the matter o' that I could keep *myself* company."

Sez her ma, "Fur shame."

I only smiled derisive. I could afford for tu disdain her sass, knowin' myself above her in intilectibility.

Sez the cappen, "Now, look a-here, Nep, mind your eye while I'm away. You knows the orders; you sail by 'em. No lubber is tu put intu harbor here, till *I* cast anchor again.

You're tu be towed by Miss Grinder, and only tu cruise where *she* cruises along o' you. Give in a good report on her log, and I'll give you a trunk full o' folderols and jimcracks. Let me hear o' a mutiny and I'll hang you tu the yard-arm. Du you hear, Nep?"

"Yes, pa," sez Neptuny. Then he kissed her, and they sot off.

Minute they was gone she pulls a snoot at me, and goes and locks herself intu her room, and never come down until dinner time.

'Twas a very nice dinner. They had a cook, and a laundress, and a chambermaid, and waiter, and a coachman, and footman, and things went on the same as if Miss Wickum had been tu home.

Neptuny eat, and never spoke a word. I stood it in dignified silence. 'Twas fur *her* tu be ashamed, not *me.*"

That evenin' my trials begun. The first beau called. The gal come in tu tell Neptuny. Sez I:

"Tell the gentleman Miss Neptuny ain't tu be seen."

Sez she, "Tell him I'll be down directly."

Sez I, "Don't you durst du it."

Sez she, "*I'm* your mistress."

"Well," sez I, "we'll see."

So down I goes, lockin' Neptuny in afore I went.

There was a young man in the front parlor. I marched up to him.

"Who may you be?" sez I.

"Well," sez he, starin', "my name is—is Jones, old lady."

Sez I, "Well, Mr. Jones, jest you pick up your hat and walk, short meter. I'm left here tu take keer o' Neptuny Wickum, and no feller is tu spent his evenin's here while I stay. Neptuny can't cum down, and you needn't call again."

So he walked, lookin' as black as ink, and awfully disgusted.

Next day there come a note tu Neptuny. She was goin' tu read it without showin' it tu me; but I jest grabbed it. 'Twas an invite tu the opery.

"Well," sez I, "you sot down and write how't you can't go."

"I *sha'n't*," sez she. "I'm not a prisoner."

Sez I, "I will!" and I sot down and writ an answer. "Give that tu the person that fetched the invite," sez I, and the gal had had her orders from Miss Wickum, and did it.

Neptuny was as mad as hops. I know she'd hev liked tu pison me.

'Twould a made anybody grin fur tu hev seen us arter that. I don't suppose we spoke tu each other twice a day, but she was always keepin' me on the go. Ef one feller didn't call, another did, and at last I had tu speak tu the footman, a good-looking fellow, quite spry on his feet.

Sez I, "Peter, are you tu be trusted?"

Sez he, "Yes'm."

Sez I, "You know why I'm here, I suppose?"

"Well," sez he, "they du say the cappen don't approve ot Miss Neptuny bein' courted."

"Yes," sez I. "Now, Peter, ef she gets off unknownst tu

me, you foller her. Ef any one calls, you come and tell—your legs is younger than mine, and I'll make you a present before I go."

The footman he bows. Sez he:

"I'll promise you that, ma'am. I'll keep my eye on Miss Neptuny. She sha'n't go nowhere without me."

Arter that I was relieved o' my responsibilitude. He kept his promise, and was at her heels the heft o' the time. It made me grin. You see she didn't suspect *him* o' watchin' her, and was very sociable, and exhibited a heap o' affabilitude tu him, while she was onpleasant tu me. Didn't make no objection to *his* runnin' arter her, fur of course she never knowed I'd spoke tu him. She couldn't so much as go intu the hall but there he was. I never saw no help so faithful in the discharge o' his duties. I made up my mind that ef the cappen did make a present o' value tu me, I'd give Peter suthin' handsome.

Couldn't no feller come tu the door but he knowed it, and sent 'em packin'. He fetched all Neptuny's notes tu me fust, and behaved exemplary, and all the time she never got mad at him. On the contrary she scarcely spoke to him without smilin'. 'Twas enough tu make you larf.

Well, things was progressing jest as the cappen would have desired, when Miss Wickum writ how't they were comin' hum. Teu tell the truth, I didn't keer tu hev her du it, Peter hevin' taken my responsibilitude on his shoulders, an' me hevin' comfort in the best spare bedroom, with nuthin tu du only ring the

bell and order things. Neptuny was more good-natured than what she had been, tu.

She comes in that mornin', and sez she:

"Well, Miss Grinder, pa and ma will arrive tu-morrow."

"So they say," sez I.

Sez she, "'Twould be a pleasant surprise teu 'em teu go and meet 'em."

"Yes," sez I.

Sez she, "I'll hev the carriage, and we'll go."

"Du," sez I.

So next day the carriage was at the door, the coachman on the box, and Peter up behind. They looked magnificent in their silver hat-bands, and I resumed all my dignitude, and sot bolt up on the yaller cushions. Neptuny sot aside me. I allers shall remember how shy her eyes looked, and how red her cheeks was, teu my dyin' day.

We driv down Broadway a way, the common folks regardin' us with envy, until we came tu a big store on a corner, the winders chock full o' laees. Sez Neptuny, dreadful pleasant:

"Lor', Miss Grinder, there's a collar you'd orter hev."

Sez I, "D'ye think so?"

"Yes," sez she; "I'm goin' tu buy it fur ye. Jest stop, William, until I get it."

Out she jumps. I didn't foller, but I sez tu Peter:

"Your young lady might want you tu carry the parcel."

He understood, and follered in a hurry. She warn't a bit mad.

I sot still in the carriage, and gettin' tired o' waitin', fell asleep. Arter a while suthin' waked me. William was a-pokin' me with his whip.

"Beg pardon fur attractin' your attention so impolite," sez he. "But ain't they gone too long—Neptuny and Peter? It's a full hour."

"Land o' liberty!" sez I, "I expect she's haulin' down all the goods in the store. I'll fetch her."

So down I got and went in. Neptuny warn't there. Neither was Peter.

"Miss," sez I to the gal behind the counter, "deu you know where the young lady in lilac silk, that come in that there carriage, is gone teu?"

She smiles perlite, and sez she:

"No, ma'am; but she went out o' the side door purty near as soon as she came in. She said if a lady asked for her—Miss Wickum, ain't it?"

"Yes," sez I.

"That I was tu give her these."

She handed me a parsel, and an envelopy. The first was the collar; the t'other her visitin' card, with these here words writ on it:

"Good-by, Miss Grinder! you've been a splendid duenna, and no doubt pa will be ever grateful, as Peter and myself are. Before you read this we shall be married, and off upon our weddin' trip. I always said I would make a love match, and I have.

Peter and I adore each other, and you have helped us so nicely in our courting. By-by—you can explain matters to pa."

The minute I read them words I was took with highstrikes.

William came in and assisted me tu the carriage, and driv me hum.

Arter a while he sez, "Beg pardon, miss, what has happened?"

"They've eloped," sez I.

"Peter and miss?" sez he.

"Yes," sez I.

"Well," sez he, "well, down stairs, allers thought 'twould be so. 'Twas pecooliar; a new footman comin' jest arter master went, and Peter disappearin' mysterious."

"Did he?" sez I.

"Yes, miss," sez he. "The first day he came I saw 'twas Mr. Jones, and I mentioned it tu him. But he requested me not tu say nuthin', and it warn't my place. Ef he chose tu wear Peter's old hat-band, I didn't know as 'twas my business."

Sez I, "Don't tell me that this here was a conspiration?"

Sez he, "I'm afeard it was, miss."

Sez I, "What will the cappen say?"

Sez he, "What I ask myself is, what'll he du? He may begin by shootin' 'em; that's handy."

I considered.

Sez I, "It don't make no difference where you drive?" sez I.

"No," sez he, "of course not, miss."

Sez I, "Stop tu Miss Peabody's, then; I'll git out there." And I did.

I hain't seen the cappen sence, but Miss Wickum called and used langwidge I sha'n't contaminate myself by repeatin'. One o' her remarks was how't I was a born fool; another, that I warn't fit tu go loose without a keeper.

'Everybody else in the house knowed Mr. Jones," she said, "'and Peter was paid fifty dollars tu stay away, and had a place now with the Jonesses."

I didn't mind her abuse; but I allers hev been respected fur my sagacitude and discretion, and I warn't a-goin' tu hev 'em disimpeached. I jest ordered her out o' the house, and I hope never tu sot eyes on her agin.

Anybody o' sense would a-knowed I was the victim o' a conspiratude, and not tu blame

NUMBER THIRTY-FIVE.

PERFECT LOVE IS OFFERED TO MISS GRINDER.

York, as I've allers said, and still continner tu say, is a most awful place. Beauty is a snare anywhere, but ef you air pertickeler good-lookin' in York, you're stared at as ef you was a peep show, and follered arter as ef you was an organ. I dursen't go out no more, without a double vail, fur my phizmahogany is one what detracts intentions from the gentlemen, and ef I could tell ye how the heft o' 'em has conducted tu me you'd be astonished.

The one that has annoyed me the wust is a furrin purson, o' dark complected appearance, with whiskers and a mustache.

I went out a Monday mornin' fur to preamble, fur the good o' my constitootion. I was conscious o' bein' pecooliarly captivatin' in my appearances, and I wore my salmon-colored shawl and pea-green bunnet-strings, which I allers did become. I pranced along with the dignitude o' a queen, and didn't condescend fur tu give none o' the men sect a glance, and 'twasn't my conduct what injuced him fur tu redress me. By him I mean the furriner. First thing I knowed, he was alongside me.

"Miss," sez he.

I paid no attention.

"Mum," sez he.

I retreated.

"*Madame,*" sez ne, and then I flewed. When it come tu French, I knowed morals was furever gone.

Never said a word to him; but the next day, meandering in the same spot, I saw him once agin—bold as brass, with a little bag onto his arm, and a eye-glass intu his eye. I attempted fur tu escape, but up he come.

"Miss," sez he agin.

I hurried away faster.

"Mum," sez he jest as before.

I cast a glance o' remittigated scorn ontu him, but he went on.

"Madame, lis'en to me."

"Begone, feller," sez I, and I flowed once more.

Next day I said tu Samanthy Peagrim, "Samanthy, supposin' you was a lady o' personal detractions, and was tu be submitted tu the unremittigated intentions o' a furrin count, what would ye du?"

"Dunno but I'd hev him," sez she.

"Lor'!" sez I. "Yeu get out, Samanthy! Suppose his intentions was disagreeable tu ye?"

"Well," sez she, "I'd tell him tu clear out."

"Very well," sez I; "but, Samanthy, supposin' he wouldn't clear?"

"Dunno what I should du then," sez she.

So, seein' I couldn't get no advice, I determined fur tu rely

upon my own sagacitude. How could I expect Samanthy tu understand the trials o' a person o' superior personal detractions. 'Tain't likely she was ever bothered.

That day I went out agin. I had some shoppin' tu du, or I wouldn't hev gone. I made my purchases in safety, but as I was a comin' out, up steps that same furrin gentleman. I thought I should hev swounded.

"Miss," sez he.

"You go way," sez I.

"Mum," sez he.

"Don't you dare redress me," sez I.

"Madame," sez he, "only lis'en one leetle minute."

"No," sez I; "not fur worlds."

I walks on, and he follers. Arter a while, sez he:

"Madame, please you stop."

Sez I, "No, sir; what do you think of me?" and I walks on.

Arter a while, sez he, "I have one leetle sing to say to madame."

"Don't you durst say it," sez I.

"Madame," sez he, "pause you one small time."

I turned around, and looked at him—gin him a most an awful glance.

Sez I, "Clear out; I know yeu furriners. I don't want nuthin' tu say tu ye," and then I rushed intu a trimmin' store.

"Ma'am," sez I to the lady behind the counter, "I've flowed

here fur purtection. A most an awful furriner is persecutin' me with his detentions."

"P'raps he's tipsy," sez she.

"He ain't got that excuse," sez I.

Arter a while, I looked out, but he was gone; so I took my departer; but now I knowed fur sartin how the infatooated critter was in love with me. 'Twasn' tu be supposed he would foller a lady three times unless he was deeply teched by her fascernations.

I sot down tu consider. I remembered how't the feelin's o' furriners was strong, and how't they often committed suicide. I began tu feel tu pity him. "Poor critter," thinks me, "ef I should drive him tu distraction's verge, 'twould be tu my blameabillitude; and," thinks me, "ef he is a count, as they mostly air, and has considerable money, and a castle, I don't see why I shouldn't hev him. 'Twould be a purty good match, and them that has said I couldn't ef I would, would find they was mistook. I'll hear what he has tu say, ef I ever am follered by him agin."

When I'd come tu this decide, I felt more equinamble in my sperits, and knowed I was right; but fur a fortnight I never sot eyes on him, and I began fur tu think he'd committed *feller-despree*, and tu hev my doubts whether I hadn't better go tu the morgy, and see ef he warn't there.

Ten weeks from that time, I was just comin' out o' a friend's house, when I seen him, black mustache, little bag, and all. He rushes up, and sez he:

"Madame!"

"Well, sir," sez I, "what do *you* want?"

Sez he, "I have something particular for madame."

"Dunno what it kin be?" sez I.

"It is de perfect love," sez he.

"Yeu go 'way," sez I; "I don't believe it."

"It is the best ting ever was," sez he.

"I prefer tu hev my liberty," sez I. "The bonds o' matrimonial ferlicity hain'r never had no detractions fur me."

He bows, and sez he, "It presairves de charms of youth most mi-r-r-r-raculously."

"Well," sez I, "I dunno about that. I know the heft o' young married ladies is clean tuckered out with housework, and the help, and the sewing on her husband's buttons, and sottin' up fur him—hain't got no complexions at all."

He looked puzzled, until I came tu the last word, then sez he:

"Ze complexion is of value."

"Yes," sez I.

"Nos'ing like it fur de beauty of de lady," sez he. "If you will accept dis perfect love, you shall be most happy."

"Oh," sez I, "how du I know but you may be an imposture?"

"Madame!" sez he

"Mebby yeu cheaty me," sez I, adaptin' myself tu his furrin understandin' o' the 'Merican langwidge."

"Upon my honor," sez he, "dis is de genuine—de reg'lar French article, mum."

"You air a French gentleman?" sez I.

"Yes, madame," sez he.

"Bin here long?" sez I.

"Since misfortune drive me from my countrie," sez he.

"I feel tu pity yeu," sez I.

Then he said so'thing I couldn't understand about havin' mercy, I believe."

Sez I, "Yeu know yeu air a perfect stranger. Dunno what my brother'd say; he'd ask what ye air worth."

"Silver plate!" sez he. Sounded like that, with the "t" left off, as a furriner might any way.

"Well," sez I, "silver plate is a good thing."

He looked kinder puzzled.

Sez he, "Yeu take my perfect love, madame?"

"It's tu sudden; I'd hev tu consider," sez I.

"You nevair have ze ozer opportunity," sez he, lookin so interestin', with his eyes cast up.

I sithed.

"Madame will say 'yes," sez he.

"Oh, dear, no!" sez I.

"When you look at it leetle while, you will change the mind," sez he. "Observe!" and he put his hand intu the portemantle, and pulled out a yaller paper.

"What on airth is that?" sez I.

"It is ze 'Perfect Love'—ze best enamel for ze skin evair manufacture," sez he. "When madame shall use it, she shall become of ze age of sixteen—she shall break every heart. Only

fifty cents a box. Madame shall purchase. Now madame finds ze skin leetle yallow, zis shall recovair it. It shall make old person like ze young. I take plazair in selling it to madame."

I hollered out.

"You imposture!" sez I, "is this what you've bin follerin' me for?"

Sez he, "Sartinly."

Sez I, "Yeu triflin' puppy, du you mean tu call me old—tu tell me tu my face I'd orter paint? How du yeu know I'm more'n sixteen? I hain't told ye. Yeu git out, or I'll call a perlice!" and I ups with my numberill, and he flowed.

Arter he was gone, I went intu Nehemiah Schubbs', and had highstrikes; and tu the day o' my death I shall beware o' furriners worse than I have before, especially them that has mustaches.

NUMBER THIRTY-SIX.

MISS GRINDER MAKES A MISTAKE.

How du you du, Perliny? Surprised tu see me, hain't ye? Look as if ye'd seen a ghost. Well, I calkerlate 'tis astonishin' I've lived to git here, arter all the perils that unpertected females experience in York. I've been robbed, and murdered, and kidnapped, and follered hum, and last Saturday I was eloped with.

You may well say "gracious suz!" I sed more than that myself. I didn't encourage his intentions—not me. I was brung up different. Besides, he was a young feller o' no great o' intilectability, and no match fur me; fur you know, Perliny, that intilectertude is what I've been celebrated fur since I took the gold medal ('twan't gold, neither, come to test it—all a sham) at the Peekskill College o' young ladies. He was pecooliarly conceited, tu; pertickerly on account o' his mustache; and he smelt o' smoke.

I was boarding with Miss Tifflin. She takes gentlemen tu breakfast and tea. Such tea, Perliny! The color o' your hair, and that's the meanest yaller going. She's got tew darters—hity-tity things; one on 'em Elvira, and t'other o' my name, Charity. Them and me didn't get along very nicely. Men

and hity-titys don't in gineral. I hev to tell 'em what I think of 'em, and *that* they don't like. But I du admire tu du it, Perliny—indeed I dew.

Used to talk to Elvira about tuckering about rigged out in tu-meetin's the heft o' the time; and I used to tell Charity mighty plain what I thought o' 'em that put on false hair and paint to detract the men sect. They was aggravatin' gals. You couldn't hev no interestin' conversation o' an intilectable natur' without them stickin' in their oars. In pertickler, when Mr. Parmlee used to hurry up intu the parlor tu converse with me, one or t'other on 'em used fur tu follow and interlude, as if they was invited.

Consequentially, I warn't astonished one day fur tu hev the chambermaid come to me sly, with a note in her hand.

"Miss Charity," sez she, "sure the young gintleman bade me give you this in sacresy."

"Very well," sez I; "leave it, Bridget," and she left it.

I felt my buzzum palpitatin'. I kinder knowed what was comin', and I tore open the envelopy. 'Twas a gentleman's handwritin', and these here was the words:

"DEAR, DEAR MISS CHARITY: Can I never have a word alone with you? Must I always endure the persecuting presence of that *torment*? For *mercy's* sake leave the table early, and meet me for *one* hour alone.

"Your exasperated, despairing, devoted

"PIGWIGGIN PARMLEE."

"Poor fellow," thinks me. "I can't hev the heart fur tu disdain his intentions arter this here disposure o' the tenderest

feelin's o' his natur. I will give him the opportune he desiderates."

So I went tu dinner, detarmined fur tu dew as he asked.

When 'twas time fur puddin' I riz up, and sez I:

"No puddin' fur me, Miss Tifflin. I'm kinder indigestable tu-day, and am obleeged tu dietary," and I sailed out o' the room.

Pigwiggin Parmlee he wasn't tu table at all; as I expected he was in the parlor.

"Evenin', Mr. Parmlee," sez I, a-castin' down my eyes.

"Oh, gracious!" sez he, and begun walkin' up and down, runnin' his hands through his hair.

"You seem to be agitationed, Mr. Parmlee," sez I.

What he would have said 'tain't fur me tu say, fur at that minute in comes that Miss Charity Tifflin.

I h'ists my eyebrows. "Got through airly," sez I.

Sez she, "Not airlier than *some folks.*"

"Well," sez I, "some folks has a right tu du what they like, I reckon."

"So has some other folks," sez she.

Sez I, "When I was young, gals didn't conduct so."

She turned up her nose.

I tuk up a paper and devolved myself in literary affairs. She, the bold critter, went and sot along o' Mr. Parmlee on the sofy.

Arter a while the other boarders cum in, and I retired tu my own apartment.

About four o'clock that arternoon Bridget cums tu me with a

note. It hadn't no direct on tew it, and sez I, "How du you know this here is fur *me* ?"

"Well," sez she, "I reckon it is, because Mr. Parmlee sez, 'Take this tew Miss Charity.'"

"It's all right," sez I, and I opens it.

I a'most swounded when I read the contents. These was them :

"CHARITY, MY ANGEL : Shakespeare has said 'the course of true love never did run smooth.' So it is with ours, I believe. I know who, and you know who is employed as a spy by Mrs. Tifflin. Some one has betrayed us. You know her cruel words —'a young man that can't pay his own debts regular ought not to marry.' We have no hope but in flight."

"Pretty fur Miss Tifflin tew interfere with me," sez I tew myself. Then I read on :

"Tu-night, at twelve, a cab will be at the door. I have made arrangements fur our wedding. Fly with me, and in an hour pursuit will be useless.

"Yours, with adoration, PIGWIGGIN."

"Tell Mr. Parmlee how't Miss Charity is agreeable tew his proposition," sez I.

Sez she, "Yis, miss."

I was in a state o' mind that can't be descriptioned fur the rest o' the day. But I felt it tew be my juty fur tu bear up. And then I felt tew rejice how't Mr. Jonathan and his hity-tity wife would see how't I warn't goin' tew leave my property tew them and theirn. And folks that had said I couldn't if I would, would be astonished.

I didn't durst look at Pigwiggin at tea time; and when the solemn hour o' twenty minutes tew twelve arriv, I packed up tew linen and one cotton, and some collars in a handkercher, and put on my hood, and vail, and a big shawl, and down stairs I went.

The house was locked up, and the boarders snorin', and it was pitch dark out o' doors. I goes on. There was a cab, and the door opened.

I goes toward it.

"Charity," sez a voice.

"Pigwiggin," sez I, smothered by emotions and my vail.

He puts out his hand and draws me in. I sots down beside him.

Sez he, "Drive tu the direction I gave you, driver," and away we driv.

Purty soon he puts his arm around my waist.

"You go 'way," sez I.

"Oh, Charity!" sez he.

Then he kisses me.

Sez I, "Don't you durst."

Sez he, "How queer your voice sounds to-night. Have you a cold?"

Sez I, "It's agitation."

"Oh!" sez he.

Arter a while sez he, "You don't feel frightened?"

Sez I, "No, Pigwiggin."

"Adorable angel," sez he.

Sez I, "Oh! you go 'way."

Sez he, "Gracious!"

Sez I, "What?"

Sez he, "Am I crazy?"

"I hope not," sez I.

Sez he, "Who are you?"

"Your Charity," sez I.

"Charity what?" sez he.

"Hey?" sez I.

"Hang the dark," sez he.

"'Tain't agreeable," sez I.

"Heavens and airth!" sez he.

"What ails ye?" sez I.

"Tell me your hull name?"

"Thought you knew it. I ain't got no middle name," sez I.

"Your name," sez he.

"Why, Charity Grinder," sez I.

"I thought so," sez he.

"Of course you did," sez I.

"How did you come here?" sez he.

"Got in," sez I.

"Why?" sez he.

"Because you was so sot on't," sez I.

"Explain," sez he.

"Why," sez I, "you writ me a couple o' letters disclosin' your feelin's, and I'm a-goin' fur tu keep 'em, tew, and I decisioned tu elope with you in kinsequence. I've broke enough

hearts in my time, I'm sorry tu say. Didn't want tu hev your'n on my conscience."

Sez he, "Here's a pickle."

Sez I, "You've done it o' your own doin's."

Sez he, "Miss Grinder, here's a most awful mistake."

"Du tell!" sez I. "What is it?"

"I thought she was you. I mean you was she. That is, I meant those letters fur Miss Charity Tifflin," sez he.

"Perjured villain!" sez I.

"I hain't," sez he.

"You air," sez I.

Sez he, "I said Miss Charity, and Bridget made a mistake and gin you the note."

I went off intu highstrikes.

He jumps out o' the cab.

"Take this here lady back again," sez he tu the driver, and he skedaddled.

So I went hum, and as true as my name is Charity Grinder I'm goin' tu have a case o' breach o' promise agin him, Perliny.

NUMBER THIRTY-SEVEN.

MISS GRINDER SECURES A LAWYER.

Miss Grinder: "Lawyer Perkins in? You he? Lor'!—don't say nuthing, jist give me a cheer and let me sot down. The state o' my wounded feelin's is sich that I'm tremblin' like a leaf. But I'm goin' tu command 'em sufficient tu tell you the hull, and I hope you'll take pertickeler notice o' what I say. Never gin him no hopes and 'twas all his own duin', and ef 'twas possible tu hev him hung I'd du it."

Lawyer Perkins: "To whom du you allude, mum?"

Miss G.: "To that wretch Pigwiggin Parmlee."

Lawyer P.: "Indeed, mum—as you very truly observe, a wretch, mum—a wretch; and in what way did he in this particular instance manifest the baseness of his soul? May I be allowed to inquire, mum."

Miss G.: "Well, Lawyer Perkins, fust and fomost he paid me the most undoubterble intentions, and then he sithed, and then he writ, and then he perposed an elopement, and then when we'd got half way he backed out and left me tu go hum alone and pay the coach hire."

Lawyer P. : "Mum, you shock me. I have heard of base ingratitude before, I have heard of cowardly and contemptible behavior before, but never in all my professional experience have I encountered anything to equal this. I give you my word of honor as a gentleman and a scholar, mum, I do indeed. Allow me to offer you a palm-leaf fan, and a glass of water ; I regret the absence of ice. Horrible conduct, unworthy of the name of man, or even of the gorilla, mum, I do assure you."

Miss G. : "Thought you'd thunk so, lawyer. Ef I'd had more experience in this here horrid world, I'd hev knowed what he was, but you see, I've got one o' them there angelic dispositions that don't suspect nobody until I've diskivered their inikwity, and bein' ruther young and considerabul affectionate, I gin him the hull emotions o' my buzzum afore I knowed he warn't worthy."

Lawyer P. : "Ah, mum, I understand you ; I can see the whole. I have often had reason to exclaim in the course of my profession : the man who could trample on the bleeding heart of woman, mum, must be a wretch indeed, mum. I hope you have a case, mum."

Miss G. : "Hey! Why, land o' liberty! ef I hain't who has? Tell ye I was half eloped with and then jilted."

Lawyer P. : "You make my blood curdle in my veins, mum. I made this inquiry in a legal sense. A brutal jury, mum, require proof. They trample on the tenderest feelings of the soul, mum, and demand proofs and witnesses, mum."

Miss G. : "I've got *them*, thank goodness. There's the coach-

man—I've got his number—and all the boarders, and all the folks I've told it tu, and it s here in my pocket in black and white. Here they air, tew notes, one on 'em requestin' a interview and t'other an elopement."

Lawyer P. : "Allow me to look at them, mum. Excellent, mum; the very thing. Ah, Mr. Pigwiggin Parmlee, we shall see, sir, whether you are to break the unsuspecting female heart at your will, sir! The only trouble we lawyers have is that in such cases as these, mum, where we would like to labor for the cause of the softer sez, we are obliged to require a fee—a large one often—we don't get much of it. The brutal jury charge us heavily; so does the judge; so do the other officers, mum. And parchment costs so much, and red tape and ink are really a frightful price, mum!"

Miss G. : "Lor', I kin afford tu pay suthin'."

Lawyer P. : "I'm rejoiced to hear it, mum. Not that one penny will go into my pocket, but for your sake, mum."

Miss G. : "Yes, I kin afford it. I've got property tu Peekskill, and twenty thousand in the bank, and a ile farm. I'd like tu hev him hung. I'd be willin' tu pay double fur that. Not out o' no sperit o' revenge, but bekase I'd like tu hev him made a warnin' o' tu the men sect."

Lawyer P. : "I applaud your motives, mum. But a brutal jury, mum, and an inhuman judge, mum, refuse to punish such traitors as they deserve; but we can make him disgorge his ill-gotten gold, mum, and he will suffer, mum. Such base wretches always have their hearts in their pockets, mum."

Miss G. : "Well, I reckon he hain't got nuthin' else there, for he don't pay his board reg'lar. But, now, look here, couldn't ye put him in the States Prison?"

Lawyer P. : "We will strive and do so, mum. He defrauded you, I think, of the coach hire?"

Miss G. : "Yes, sir—a dollar-and-a-half. Shouldn't a paid it only he was swearin' horrid outside the house at the solemn hour o' half-past one."

Lawyer P. : "Horrible! horrible! Ahem! Did you say, mum, you're full property was in the neighborhood of Peeks-kill?"

Miss G. : "Law, yes; and my money is in the Brewers' and Bakers' Bank. Don't use much on't. My rents is consider-able for a lone young lady. Don't expect I shill ever unite intu the bonds o' pardnership with nobody now. My feelin's is so disgusted with the men sect!"

Lawyer P. : "Allow me, mum, to assert that all men are not the villains this wretch has proved himself, mum."

Miss G. : "Well, p'raps not; but I'm kinder sot agin 'em. Tu be harf aloped with is aggravatin'."

Lawyer P. : "Heart-breaking, mum. Ah! had I been in his place, mum, I——, but no matter—no matter! You are for-ever disgusted with the sex to which I have the misfortune to belong, mum."

Miss G. : "Lor', don't go a thinkin' I allude such conduct tu you. Probably you've got a pardner a'ready."

Lawyer P. : "No, mum, no. I am that most wretched of

all beings, mum, an old bachelor, mum. There was an angel —but no matter, mum, except that I must be allowed to remark that the outline of your countenance reminds me of her, mum. She was all grace and beauty."

Miss G. : "I allers du feel tu pity bachelders, they ginerally suffer so fur want o' a congemalate companionship o' the wimmin sect, and the heft o' ther buttons is off."

Lawyer P. : "Ah, you little know, mum."

Miss G. : "Yes, I du. Ther was bachelder Owl. He lived alone in rooms tu Peekskill. They was all stuck up with dirt, such a nasty place I never did see, and he lived on bread, and bologny, and beer, because he couldn't cook nuthin'."

Lawyer P. : "Unhappy wretch! But the circumstance of your case, mum. Allow me tu ask a few questions. How did the wretch unworthy of the name of man, mum, find an excuse for his conduct, mum?"

Miss G. : "He didn't make none."

Lawyer P. : "I beg your pardon. But I presume there was a quarrel."

Miss G. : "No, ther warn't. He hadn't no excuse. He writ tu me tu elope, and I felt tu be afraid how't ef I didn't exceed tu his request he'd go and commit feller-de-spree, as some has I've been cruel tu."

Lawyer P. : "I can understand their emotions, mum. Well, mum?"

Miss G : "Well, I tuk some things along o' me and went out tu the cab when it arriv, and entered, and Pigwiggin fust

felt tu rejice how't I'd come, said he did anyhow, and made manifestations o' kissin' me, which I rejected with dignitude, and then he went and pretended he didn't know me, and said, 'Driver, drive this here lady hum,' and skedaddled. Ef ever there was a promise o' breach this is one."

Lawyer P. : "Ah, me, we will have him, mum. My blood boils when I think of him, mum. And you have witnesses. We will take the list, mum."

Miss G. : "Yes, there's Miss Tifflin, the lady o' the house, and her darters, and Miss Smith, and Miss Brown, and Bridget Gallager, and the coachman, and the rest I've told on't."

Lawyer P. : "Dear me, mum, a formidable list indeed. I trust we shall have more than Pigwiggin expects to confront him with. Will you favor me with your address, mum. Thank you; I shall call on you to-morrow, and we shall probably remember more of this heart-blighting perfidy, mum. These letters are precious evidence, mum. We shall have a sad pleasure in collecting evidence, mum. You will be at home at three. I I shall do myself the pleasure of calling then."

Miss G. : "Du. I shill recollect more then; my feelin's kind o' obfusticates me jist now."

Lawyer P. : "Naturally, naturally, mum. But, mum, allow me to observe, the worst of this villain's conduct—the worst consequence I mean—is, that you abhor my unhappy sex."

Miss G. : "Well, I dunno, but I'll a'tempt fur tu obviate my dislike tu 'em. 'Tain't fair fur tu sot agin all because one hain't turned out right, I know."

Lawyer P. : "No, mum, no. It is not fair, mum, to men who, like myself, *adore* your sex, mum. Take my arm, mum —the stairs are steep—and allow me to see you to the door. Better, mum, to suffer than to be the wretch who stabs."

Miss G. : "Yes, I hev the conscientiousness o' rektertude fur tu sustain me. When my bography is writ, them that hain't appreciated me will see how't I've bore all my trials with dignitude, and have been a model tu my sect."

Lawyer P. "Yes, mum. I shall remember your high moral character, mum ; I shall place it before the court ; I feel great joy, mum, in conducting a case for one so worthy. To-morrow we shall meet again, mum. Adieu. I cannote sooth your breaking heart, mum, for mine is breaking too, mum ; be careful of the step. Au revoir, mum."

Miss G. : "Good-by. It's comfortin' fur tu meet a congenialate sperit intu this vale o' bothers."

Lawyer P. : "It is indeed. But it makes it harder to return to a fireside, mum, unblest, mum, by the presence of lovely woman, mum."

Miss G. : "Lor', now, why don't you select a pardner?"

Lawyer P. : "Because, mum, the one whose grace, dignity, and excellence have won my heart, has been rendered averse to thoughts of union by the perfidy of one villain, mum—unworthy even of the name of Pigwiggin ; but I speak too boldly, I see, mum. Let me retire before I commit myself further. Pardon me, mum."

Miss G. : "Lor', you're very excusable."

Lawyer P. : "Thank you, mum ; adieu, mum. We shall meet again to-morrow, mum. How I shall look forward to to-morrow. Adieu."

Miss Grinder departs.

Lawyer P. : "Nice little property ; pretty good sum in bank ; even with female attached it would be better than this dirty office and no client. I'll do it. But I'll see what can be got out of the Pigwiggin case first. There was Chouse, who conducted the case of Heart versus Jilter, and married the plaintiff ; the case brought him enough to furnish a house with, and the expenses of the bridal tour."

NUMBER THIRTY-EIGHT.

CHARITY IS ENGAGED TO A MEMBER OF THE BAR.

Lawful suz! air this you, Tabby Mouser? Who'd a thunk it! How yaller you air lookin'; ain't you well? Glad tu hear how't you air, but I wouldn't a supposed you was. Didn't know as I'd speak tu ye when I fust saw ye—I felt so consarned about bein' the talk o' the hull o' Peekskill. What should they talk about? Why, land o' liberty! don't you know? I shouldn't hev reckoned how't there was a critter there as hadn't had me in ther mouths; but then you've ben travelin'. I'd like tu hev the patron o' that gownd. I'm goin' tu travel, tew. 'Tain't becomin' tu your shape, you are so slab-sided, but 'twould be tu mine.

Where am I goin'? Why, onto a weddin' tower, of course. I'm goin' tu be united into the bonds o' matermony with a legal lawyer o' New York—one o' the fust o' his perfession—name o' Perkins. He's a very elegant man, and the way he cum tu manerfest his intentions was pecooliar.

You see, I was a boardin' tu a fashionable boardin'-us, and there I was infested with the admerations o' a number o' gentlemen, though I treated 'em with onparalleled scorn. However,

one on 'em had the art tu make a fav'rable depression ontu me, and arter he had writ a thousand notes tu me, and gone ontu his knees and threatened tu commit feller-de-spree, I dissented tu elope with him.

Don't never trust no men critters, Tabby. Their vows isn't worth nothin'. Guess what was my feelin's when, arter condescendin' tu go off with the critter, and actilly bein' in the carridge, he changed his senterments and left me, half eloped with, tu go hum alone. Nat'rally I felt tu be anxious tu punish him, and I called on a legal lawyer fur tu constitute perceedin's o' a breach o' promise o' marriage libel suit. The gentleman I perchanced tu call ontu was lawyer Perkins, and the fust moment he saw me he devoted himself tu me. He hadn't no occasion fur tu explain his feelin's fur a spell, but he says he exasperated 'em a-toilin' in my cause. He had the gentleman (I wouldn't mention his name on no account) cotcht fur me, and found out how't he hadn't nothin', and didn't expct tu hev nothin', and owed his board bill, and his tailor, and his shoemaker, and was jest married on the sly tu the landlady's darter. And he told me how't a onfeelin' judge and jury wouldnt hang him, and how, even if we was tu get hold on his ring and watch, they warn't gold and dimonts, but only granite and plumbago, or suthin' o' those naturs, and ther warn't no way tu recompense my wounded feelin's in a pecooniary way. "Only," sez he, a-gettin' ontu his knees—we was alone in his office—"only, my dear madam —or, rather, my dear miss—there is ways tu heal the wounds o' the heart o' a tender natur'."

"Dunno what you kin mean," sez I.

Sez he, "By acceptin' o' the devotion o' another."

"Deu tell," sez I. "But I hain't had another offered tu me."

Sez he, "It air."

Sez I, "You air mistook."

Sez he, "Behold me at your feet, mum."

"What hev you got down there fur?" sez I.

"Tu offer you my hand and heart," sez he.

"Deu go 'way," sez I. "I don't place no faith in the men sect no more."

Sez he, "You wrong 'em, mum."

Sez I, "No, I don't—like as not you'd act like the other critter."

Sez he, "Hear me swear."

Sez I, "Don't you durst use no bad langwidge."

Sez he, "I intended tu say, mum, believe me on oath, mum."

Sez I, "No, Lawyer Perkins, my heart is turned tu stun."

Sez he, "Let adoration soften it."

Sez I, "Oh, don't! Your unmitigated intentions only distresses me."

Sez he, "Don't say that—give me hope."

"Hope o' what?" sez I.

"That you will become Mrs. Perkins," sez he.

Sez I, "Spare my blushes," and I swounded.

This here is my engagement ring. It was a present tu Law-

yer Perkins from a clientude what he divorced, so't he could marry another wife. It's got a pearl intu it—a pearl dug out o' the mines o' Golcondy, Lawyer Perkins sez.

Now, seein' you air here, s'posin' you be bride-maid, and s'posin' you go along o' me tu the dressmaker's. I ginerally make for myself, but on this here occasion I shill hev tu make a pertickeler spludge, seein' we're tu be united tu a church, and pro'bly the hull o' Fifty aveny will turn out tu see the spectacular. Hope they won't hev nuthin' in the papers about the beauty o' the bride. It's so annoyin' and confusin' tu them o' retirin' sentiments tu read critikems about ther looks. Seems tu me if I'd been Queen Victory's darter I'd gin up. Ther was columbs on columbs o' descriptives o' her appearance when she was married. I hope they won't treat me so.

Ain't do danger?—they let common folks alone? Why, Tabby, I guess ther's as much danger as when any other detractive person comes before the public; and I'd hev you remember a legal lawyer's lady *ain't* common folks.

Is my espouzed young or old? Well, Tabby, he's arriv at the fascernatin' period o' middlin' life, neither one nor t'other. He's a fine figger o' a man, and the only fault I find is, his nose is ruther long, and he ain't got no shirt collar. I shall make him wear 'em, though, arter we are one. My weddin' dress is tu be a pale laylock. I had it took up tu the dressmaker's yesterday. Here we air; come in.

"Well, Miss Prink, heow d'ye du?"

Miss Prink: "Oh, you are the lady that wants the lilac silk

made. There's been a mistake somehow. They haven't sent half enough."

Charity: "Lor', I'll run right back. I declare, I'm skeered. Mebbe the arrand boy took it. I bought seven yards."

Miss Prink: "Oh dear me, madam, seven yards won't do. It takes fourteen."

Charity: "Land o' liberty! I hain't never used more'n seven in my life. Used to get five or six, but sence it's the fashion tu wear hoops I've had another breadth. I sha'n't fling my money tu the pigs. Besides, I knows the ways o' you York dressmakers. You kin make it if you like."

Miss Prink: "I really don't see how."

Charity: "Yes, you du—and I want it tu sot slick, tu, fur it's fur a pertikelar occasion. P'int o' fact, I'm about tu be united tu a legal lawyer o' this city, and bein', as he sez, the elect o' York will be tu church tu observe us, I don't want no wrinkles in my back."

Miss Prink: "There won't be stuff enough for any."

Tabby Mouser: "He! he! he!"

Miss Prink: "I mean no back. You'd better get seven yards more, madam. You'd of course want a nice train with a wedding dress, and sleeves take a width."

Charity: "I want short sleeves and low neck, and a flounce."

Miss Prink: "Oh, my!"

Charity: "Hey?"

Miss Prink: "Where's the flounce to come from, miss?

Charity: "What you don't make sleeves of."

Tabby: "You will look sweet in a low body, dear."

Charity: "Of course I shall. And I don't care fur no great width of a flounce."

Miss Prink: "I hope not, ma'am. And it's fair to warn you that you'll only have four breadths, and that the skirt won't come to the ankles."

Charity: "Well, I don't keer tu trail my petticuts through the mud. And I'm goin' tu hev rosettes put ontu my slippers, so't I shouldn't like tu hev my feet hid up. Here's some old caliker fur facing, and some gilt buttons. I expect they'll tax all creation fur a bridewell bunnit."

Miss Prink groans, and begins to cut out the waist.

Charity stands up to be fitted.

Tabby Mouser (to milliner's girl): "The idea o' her gettin' married."

Girl: "There's hopes for everybody."

Tabby: "Why, she's a dreadful age. She was grown up when I was quite a little gal. I should think she'd be ashamed of herself to get married now. Well, poor man! I pity him."

Girl: "Ain't she a good temper?"

Tabby: "You might judge by her expression. And just look at that lilac against her yaller skin."

Girl: "The short sleeves and the skirt is what I'm thinking of."

Charity: "How does it fit?"

Tabby: "Oh, splendid! Lilac is just what you ought to wear."

Girl: "Oh! how becoming it will be with bracelets!"

Charity: "I've got some wax beads I shill string. Now mind, Miss Prink, sew it strong. I think, come tu consider, I sha'n't buy no bunnit. A yard o' bobbinet and a wreath o' orange blossoms will du tu wear tu the altar, and I'll hev my last bunnit trimmed with green, and wear the vail aiong with it tu travel. I'll come arter the gound a Mcnday, Miss Prink. Good-by. I'm goin' tu du some more shoppin', and arter that, Tabby, I'll go hum tu tea with you, tu where you air visitin', fur I ain't sot up, Tabby, by bein' elewated in serciety, and shill be jest as afferbul and condescending when I'm the bride o' a legal lawyer as I hev been all my life. I sha'n't take no airs over you, Tabby, and whenever none o' the elect o' New York ain't visitin' me shall allers be glad tu put you in my spare."

NUMBER THIRTY-NINE.

A LEAF FROM CHARITY GRINDER'S DIARY ON HER WEDDING-DAY.

Fust o' September, 7 o'clock.—I open these here pages fur tu sot down my emotions on my weddin' mornin'. Me and Perkins is tu be married at harf-parst ten. Tabby Mouser is tu be bride-maid. What an envious critter she is! Thank fortune, I warn't made like her. She's been detractable toward Perkins. Made remarks consarnin' his nose, and said she hoped tu gracious when she was made one her espouzed wouldn't be an old bachelder.

"An old fiddlestick's end," sez I. "Du you like widivers?"

"No," sez she. "But young men is more agreeable."

"Lor'," sez I, "should think you'd hev some one o' a sootable age, ef you hed any one."

Sez she, "Sootable? Why, I'm ages younger'n what you be. I look old on account o' ill-health."

"You're strong as a hoss," sez I, "and you're a seniority o' mine, any way."

"I hain't," sez she. "You was growed up when I was a little critter. Only I was intellectable and got took notice of by growed-up folks."

And I didn't say nuthin' more, for she was tu put up my back hair in a waterfall, and I knowed ef I made her mad 'twouldn't be done straight. So we made up, and I expect that's her at the door now.

9 o'clock.—I'm dressed in my bridal costoom. How my heart does palpertate. Perkins is comin' round the corner in a cab. I see his nose a'ready. Now he's speakin' tu the driver.

Adoo, dear pages. When I write ontu you agin I won't be a blushin' maiden no more, but a married matron, united intu matermony tu a legal lawyer. I'll be Mrs. Perkins, not Charity Grinder. Adoo, scenes o' my galhood! A new life is before me.

Fust o' September, 9 o'clock at night.—I wonder whether I couldn't hev the law o' Perkins. Oh, the wretch! The deceivin' critter!

I allers said beware o' the men sect, and now I suffer fur not bewarin' o' them myself. I thought it was bad enough tu be half eloped with, but this is wuss.

We arriv at church all safe, and found the minister there. He made us stand up before him. A gentleman Mr. Perkins had fur groomsman stood behind him, and Tabby Mouser stood behind me. The minister said a few words about the objict o' marryin' and the juties o' them that was, then sez he:

"Lawyer Perkins, now I want to know whether you'll hev this lady fur tu live with discordant tu the state o' matermony? take care on her, whether 'tis well or only middlin', or confined tu bed? and be a good pervider as long as you live?"

Sez Lawyer Perkins, "I will."

He might o' sed more on sich an occasion.

Sez the minister tu me:

"Miss Grinder, I feel tu be obliged tu ask you whether you air willin' tu hev Lawyer Perkins fur your lawful, legal, wedded pardner?"

"Well," sez I, "I hev made up my mind tu, though, arter my disdain o' the hull men sect, it does seem kinder curus. But you see he felt tu be wretched on account o' my scorn, and I gin in. I hope I sha'n't regret it."

Minister goes on:

"Will you obey him, and honor him, and stick tu him all your life?"

"Well," sez I, "I dunno about givin' up my own way; but I'll do what I think best. And I sha'n't stay from hum much. I'm no great gadder."

Then he pronounced us man and wife, and shook hands with us, and we all went and had oysters at a restaurant. Then Tabby went along o' us, and the groomsman took his departer, and we driv hum tu Mr. Perkins' house.

'Twas a shaky old frame; but I knowed he was a bachelder, and hadn't had no great o' a habertation, and besides we was resolved tu live tu Peekskill. But there was suthin' queer about the place, and that was the noise o' children.

"Lawyer Perkins," sez I, "you didn't tell me how't you had tenants."

"Well, I hain't, sez he.

"Some o' the neighbors in, perhaps," sez I.

He didn't say nothin'. He walks us intu the parlor—a nasty, dirty place, all cobwebs—and goes out again.

"Bridget," I hears him call, "fetch up the children."

Then he comes in agin. Arter a while up comes feet, stampin' and scrapin', and in walks the help.

"This is your new missus," sez he.

"Good mornin', ma'am," sez she.

"Heow d'ye du?" sez I. "You and me has got tu get tu work cleanin' pretty soon, I reckon, by the looks o' things. And you hadn't orter hev all the neighbor's young 'uns intu your master's house."

Lawyer Perkins looks womblecropt, and sez he:

"Miss Grinder, mum—I mean Mrs. Perkins, mum—I have an explanation tu make, mum."

"Go ahead and make it," sez I.

"I believe you supposed me a bachelor, mum," sez he.

"Eh?" sez I.

"A bachelor, mum," sez he. "The fact is, I have always been an admirer of the fair sex, mum; and there was a former Mrs. Perkins, mum; long deceased, mum. Previous to which, mum, she eloped with a clerk of mine, mum, and all the ready money there happened to be in the house, mum, which was not much, Mrs. Perkins, mum, I assure you."

"Land o' liberty!" sez I, "do you durst confess to be an abominable widder."

He goes harf down ontu his knees, and sez he;

"She left me a pledge o' her affection, mum—a memento of our hours of felicity. Allow me to introduce them, mum. Children, come and kiss your new mamma!" and in comes eight o' the dirtiest young 'uns I ever sot eyes onto.

"There are Washington, Napoleon, Agrippa, Cleopatra, Platemy, Augustus, Cynthia, and Aurora," sez he. "Ther' pet names is Washy, Pony, Grippy, Pat, Lemy, Gust, Cinth, and Rory, mum," sez he.

"Eight on 'em," sez I. I couldn't say nuthin' more.

"Eight angel blessins!" sez he. "Grippy ain't you ashamed of pinching your sister Cinth at such a moment. They need a mother's care, mum."

"And soap and water, tu, I should think," sez I. "The late Miss Perkins had plenty of 'em, anyway."

"She always presented me with twins," sez he.

"Should think she did," sez I. "Any more of 'em?"

"No," sez he, "no more *children*."

"Out with it," sez I. "The hull truth, and nuthin' *but* the truth."

"Well," sez he, "I have the happiness of informing you that your hours of loneliness during my absence will be cheered by the presence of my late wife's mother, Mrs. Bamberry, mum, who is confined to her bed the best part o' the time with rheumatism, and by the society of her maiden daughter, who is at present absent."

"She'd better stay," sez I.

"She is certain tu return, mum," sez he.

"Well," sez I, "of all tricks tu play upon a body? You a legal lawyer, too. I'll hev a divorce."

"You never asked me whether I'd been married," sez he.

"'Tain't the marryin', it's the young 'uns," sez I. "I ain't a-goin' tu stay here. I'll go hum."

"You may depart, mum," sez he. "I shall not bar your way, mum; but remember you consign me to despair, mum. When the heart's best affections have been awakened, tu have 'em crushed is death, mum. To look intu eyes made to express emotions and tenderness, mum, and read scorn in them, mum, is to be cast from the heights of bliss, mum, tu the charnel-house of despair. I confess my guilt, mum; but had I not temptation, mum? Allow me to lead you to the mirror, mum. Can you wonder when you gaze upon that fair reflection, mum, that it beguiles weak man to err, mum? And when combined with such charms as you reflect upon the qualities of mind and heart, mum, and the loneliness of my lot, mum, can you blame me? No, gentlemen of the jury—I mean Mrs. Perkins—mum, that were impossible. But go, charmer—leave the one who loves you tu despair. There yet remains in the chemist stores of old New York laudanum and arsenic. There is a river and a morgue for the weary. Farewell, mum."

"Well," sez I, "seein' you feel so bad, I reckon I'll forgive you. Take them young 'uns down stairs, Bridget, and get a kettle o' hot water fur 'em; and if there is a place clean enough tu eat in we'll hev tea. Things ain't goin tu be as they air here if we only stay a week."

I'd been consideratin', and though Mr. Perkins had deceived me, and though he did deserve tu be put in jail, he was the fust husband I'd ever had, and I didn't want tu get rid o' him before they, that has said I couldn't if I would, had seen him. Besides, he is a legal lawyer, and a fine figger of a man, and has the most intilectible nose I ever sot eyes on. But I'll hev it out o' Miss Bamberry and her darter, and them young 'uns, as sure as my name is Miss Perkins.

NUMBER FORTY.

THE LATE MISS GRINDER HAS QUEEN EMMA TO TEA.

I ain't Miss Grinder no more. I'm Miss Lawyer Perkins. Them that has said I couldn't if I would, know the truth o' their dissertions now. I allers hev felt tu scorn and despise 'em. Now I feel tu pity 'em; though it's only my nobility o' soul that makes me du it, fur they ain't deservin' o' no pity. Suppose they talk agin me now wuss than ever. Poor old maids!

At present we're residin' to York. I've had the house fixed up consid'rable, and I've had all the young 'uns sent tu a boardin'-school o' a cheap denomination, and give the late Miss Perkins' ma and sister orders to quit. They air a-goin' tu their cousin Jenning's Monday, and the help has left, and I've got another by the name o' Jane. I keep her at it.

Airly as it is I have Perkins under my thumb. He doesn't du nuthin' without my orders. You see *I* hev the money, and until he gets clientudes he won't have none. I keep remindin' him of that

He sot up purty high about the late Miss Perkins' relationships goin'; but he's gin in at last. I believe he's goin' tu pay their board on the sly. I'll watch him, though. Married life

has its troubles—I didn't never know how great they was. Ther's his temper, and his buttons, and darnin' his stockin's, and seein' he don't look arter pretty gals, or be perlite tu designing widders. Men is so deceptive.

It takes half the time tu patch 'em and the rest half tu watch 'em. There's a young help down the street that allers sweeps the walk just as Lawyer Perkins goes past mornin's. I think it is premedulated; but I've gin him warnin' what'll happen if he takes notice on her. He sezs:

"Mrs. Perkins, mum, can you suspect either my eyes or my heart of wandering when such charms dwell at home, mum, under the name o' Mrs. Perkins?"

But he wanted a five-dollar bill just then, and was nat'rally perlite. However, I warn't goin' tu tell you about him, but what happened a spell ago.

One night, a few weeks arter I was in the enjoyment o' connuble solicitude, him and me was sottin' in the parlor, when he sez tu me:

"Have you read, mum, of Queen Emma's arrival in the city, mum?"

"Yes, I have," sez I; "and I tell you what, Lawyer Perkins, I mean tu have her tu tea."

"Eh!" sez he. "Pardon me, Mrs. Perkins, mum, but I scarcely comprehend."

"Well," sez I, "I mean tu send Queen Emma an invite tu tea."

Sez he, "Mrs. Perkins, mum, I fear royalty would scarcely honor our humble board with its presence."

"They say she ain't a bit stuck up," sez I. "Anyway, I'll ask her."

Sez he, "I think it would be useless, mum."

Sez I, "Ef you durst to hinder me from hevin' all the company I want you'll find yourself mistaken."

"You misunderstand me, mum," sez he.

"Well," sez I, "jest don't give me no reason tu, but take the note to-morrow and fetch back an answer."

"A note, mum?" sez he.

"Tu Queen Emma," sez I.

"Oh," sez he, lookin' very queer. I reckon he thought I'd spend tu much on company, or else he'd been a-flirtin' with her, and was afeard it would all come out. Anyway, I intended fur tu hev her come. Arter he had retired I sot down and writ the follerin':

"MISS SANDWICH—*Dear Mum:* I sot down fur tu take the liberty o' sendin' you an invite tu tea. I shouldn't hev presumptioned tu du it only fur my elevated position in serciety. I'm the lady o' a legal lawyer and move in the fust o' circles. 'Twon't be no deirogation o' you tu come tu see *me*, ef you air a queen. My residenz is No. — D—— street, and we hev tea at six. Please answer by the bearer, my husband, Lawyer Perkins, and believe me yours, with respex,

"The late MISS CHARITY GRINDER,
"MISS LEGAL LAWYER PERKINS."

"Now," sez I tu Perkins the next day, "you jest take this tu where Queen Emma is stopping and fotch hum an answer," and he took it, larfin' as ef 'twas a terrible joke, and sot out.

When he comes hum, sez I, "Well?"

Sez he, "Hey?"

Sez I, "What did Queen Emma say?"

"Well," sez he, "she said she calkerlated she'd come, mum, ef she warn't otherwise engaged.

"Didn't she send no perlite message about rejoicin' tu make Miss Lawyer Perkins' acquaintance?" sez I.

"Well," sez he, "come to think on't, she did."

Sez I, "that's the way o' the men sect—they allers forget the importanttest p'int."

"We air inferior in such things tu yourn, mum," sez he; and that's the wust o' Legal Lawyer Perkins—the more you blow him up the perliter he is; can't have it out with him nohow.

Well, seein' Queen Emma was comin', I sot tu work and done up my preserves, and made cake and all kinds o' goodies, and I told Legal Lawyer Perkins how't the minute he come hum he must go up and put on his best shirt and neck-tie, and when he come in tu call her Miss Sandwich, and not forget and go redressin' o' her by her crissen name, and he promised tu.

Well, I dressed in my weddin' gownd, and waited and waited, and four o'clock come and she hadn't arriv'. And then sez I tu the help:

"Jane, you go down tu the corner and keep a bright lookout. Queen Emma is a-comin', and I don't want her tu miss the house. She's a furriner and don't talk American, and maybe might go astray."

"Is it a quane she is?' sez Jane.

"Yes," sez I.

"Lor' save us!" sez the gal. "Would she aven herself to come here and take tay wid yees?"

Sez I, "We're all free and equal here, only the helps; and I don't consider it no honor, seein' I be who I be."

She makes a courtesy, and sez she:

"Mum, if ye plaze, if she's a bit like Quane Victory she'll come in her kerridge."

"Well," sez I, "you watch the kerridges, tu; but she may come in a stage."

"How'll I know her?" sez the gal.

"She's kind o' cullered," sez I, "and she's a furriner. You ask her if she ain't Queen Emma, and she'll tell you."

Well, the gal went off, and in about an hour more she came back with a lady along o' her. She was a good deal darker than I expected, and wasn't dressed no great; but she was smilin' and noddin' very afferbel indeed.

I runs out, and sez I, "Why, here you air at last, Miss Sandwich. I a'most gin you up. How air ye?"

She nods and grins.

Sez Jane, "She's the funniest quane ever I see. I'd a took her fur a nagur. And niver a word a body can understand does she know."

"Why, la? she's a furriner, of course," sez I. "Du take a seat, Miss Sandwich," and she sot down.

Sez Jane, "I axed her was her name Quane Emma, and she said 'Yes.'"

"Excuse the help for not callin' on ye, Miss Sandwich," sez I.

She nods, and sez she, "Yes, I Emma. Where is leetle baby?"

"Eh?" sez I. "Lor', me and Legal Lawyer Perkins ain't got no famerly."

"Me no understand," sez she.

"Oh!" sez I, adaptin' o' my langwidge to furrin understandin'. "All gone baby—no baby—never had none."

"Oh!" sez she, clasping her hands. "It is, den, dead?"

"Mussy, no," sez I; "never was born."

Sez she, "I comprehend not."

Sez I, "I wish I understood Sandwich, but I don't."

Jess then the door opened, and I knowed my spouze had arriv'. I runs out.

"Fix yerself, smart," sez I. "Miss Sandwich is here."

"Eh?" sez he.

"Queen Emma has come," sez I.

"Ah! ha! one of your little witticisms, Mrs. Perkins, mum," sez he.

"'Tain't," sez I. "It's true; and she's jest like other colored folks, only furrin."

Sez he, "I hope you air not feverish, Miss Perkins, mum."

Sez I, "Law, no, I ain't crazy, if that's what you mean. Go up and fix, and you'll see."

So he went and fixed, and down he comes.

Minit he enters, sez I, "Miss Sandwich, allow me tu interduce you tu my espoused pardner, Legal Lawyer Perkins."

She courtesies. He bows, starin' like a loon. Then he whispers tu me, "You air mistaken, I assure you, Mrs. Perkins, mum."

Sez I, "No, I hain't. Why, land o' liberty! 'tain't sech a dretful honor."

Then the tea-bell rung, and we all went down and sot by. Purty soon there come a knockin' at the basement door, and the gal answers and comes in.

Sez she, "A gentleman, mum."

Sez I, "Show him in."

I was willin' he should see Queen Emma and me was intimate, whoever he was.

So in walks a man, bowin', and sez he, in furrin accent:

"Madame, I understand you have kindly entertained my newly arrived nurse, Emma. I am oblige. She did lose herself. I will now escort her home."

"Eh?" sez I.

"There she is, I see," sez he.

"Why, *that's* Queen Emma," sez I; but Lawyer Perkins squoze my foot with his'n, and I begun tu think I was mistook. So I kept quiet. Then the colored woman flowed tu the furrin gentleman and kissed his hand and cried, and he sez:

"She was my faithful nurse in the West Indies, and now that I have marry, I send for her to nurse my child. I thank you very much, sir and madame, for her entertainments."

"Always delighted tu be of use," sez Lawyer P., and out they walks.

I'd a mind tu tear her eyes out, only I didn't want tu be larfed at. What is the use o' a tongue if you dunno American? I bet the critter thought she'd parse herself off fur Queen Emma. Couldn't be so stupid as not tu know what I said, when I talked as furrin as I could.

Lawyer Perkins condolated with me, and sed 'twas a nat'ral mistake, and that mebbe Queen Emma would come next day, and she didn't. Good reason why; fur a week arter, when I was huntin' his pockets fur love letters, I found mine tu her. He hadn't never gin it. He didn't hev much sleep that night, I reckon. I kin hear him tors and groan yet. If it hadn't a been fur his neglectin' my orders, I'd hev had Queen Emma tu tea, and had it tu write tu Tabby Mouser and Jonathan, and the rest tu Peekskill; and I wouldn t hev thrown away my sass and cake on a colored help, and the neighbors would hev seen a coach and six horses fixed up with wampum and gilt driv tu the door, and Queen Emma would have got out with her crown and feathers, and a trail a yard long; and they'd a knowed that I was somebody o' gentilitude and intellectability, and gin me proper respect fur the future; and this is a warnin' tu me not tu trust the men sect with nuthin'. The best on 'em is deceivin' traitors. Like enough, Legal Lawyer Perkins thought she'd bring some o' the Sandwich noblemen along, and was jealous. That's one o' the ill conveniences o' bein' a person o' considerable good looks and attractin' attention. Your pardner will be jealous.

NUMBER FORTY-ONE.

LAWYER PERKINS WINKS.

Oh, Legal Lawyer Perkins, don't tell me! Do you think I haven't got no eye? Don't you see 'em turned up tu Aurory, wonderin' at your conduct? I'd have you tu know that there have been them as has knowed my vally ef you don't. There's them that would a-given their two eyes out o' their head fur a smile o' mine, and it's fur this here that I have scorned 'em all. Men, you ain't fit fur tu black their boots fur 'em. The fust magnits o' literary serciety has gin me their intentions, and has committed feller-de-spree on account o' my coldness. I used tu be called the Iceberg o' Peekskill on account o' the coldness o' my conduct tu the gentlemen sect. I've had twenty-five propositions o' nuptial marriage, and no eend o' serenades; and I've been eloped with twice and a arf, and I might have had more'n one o' the Presidents o' these United States, and a perfesser o' knowledge in a college, and I condescended tu hev a legal lawyer without a t'other coat, and there is my thanks.

What have you done? Oh, you critter! you pison sarpint o' serciety, you know! You've winked at the help. I seen you. You winked at her with your left eye. Don't deny it. And

look a-here, Legal Lawyer Perkins, ef you want a drink o' water, tu cover your confusion o' countenance, you go and git it out o' the kokernut dipper ontu the back porch, and don't muck up my goblicks that I've shined up till they're as nice as dimonts, and you can see your phizmogony intu 'em like glass.

Whatever you have tu say o' me arter I'm dead and gone, you can't say how't I didn't have my house like wax, and devote myself tu your comfort, you ungrateful man. That very puddin' you've been gobberlin' without a thought o' me, though proberly you *was* a ruminatin' ontu the help, was made by these hands, that some I won't mention would ha' been glad to call their own, but that you don't vally one mite. Oh, don't tell *me*, Lawyer Perkins!—and before you lean your head back agin my rockin'-cheer be pleased tu put your handkercher behind it; there's tu much lard and hair dye on your hair tu improve my furniture—and when I'm expired o' cruelty and neglect, I want them that comes tu my funeral tu say, "How good she kept her things." There, now, you're a-kickin' the table-leg.

Law, yes, when I was a gal the folks used tu say, "There's Charity, now. She is sure tu make a good match. She's got beauty, and afferbilitude, and manners that would be a credit tu the upper rank o' sercietude, and she's *intellectabil*—one o' the talentedest o' her sect—and there's suthin' about her, that you don't often see in a young gal, tu distract the distension o' the most discernin' o'the men sect."

And there's other things they used tu say that my modesty won't allow me fur tu repeat, and here's the eend on't; gone

through the woods tu pick up a crooked stick at last. Ah! and tu be betrayed, and insulted, and wounded intu the tenderest feelin's o' my buzzum. Don't you dare deny it, Legal Lawyer Perkins, you winked at her. No, you haven't got tickdollaryou in your eye. Ef you had you'd go tu bed, and be lazier than what you be *now*. I haven't a solitary doubt how't that's the reason you ain't got no clientudes, you're lookin' out o' the winder tu wink at the gal sect the heft o' the time. 'Twarn't so bad when you was a widdiwer; but now you be a married man, you might know better. 'Tain't my own wounded feelin's I'm thinkin' of, but the disgrace of hearin' folks say, "There's the late Miss Grinder. Miss Legal Lawyer Perkins' pardner winkin' at a help."

I've gin the gal warnin', and engaged a humbly colored person, o' middlin' age, with one eye, and pitted, and told her how't ef you was caught winkin' at her she'd walk short meter. No, don't tell that falsehood about the tickdollaryou. I wouldn't believe you on your testament oath.

Where air you goin', eh? Tu see a gentleman on bizness. Purty bizness, I calkerlate. Goin' tu git a patent out fur winkin' at gals the best way, I shouldn't wonder. Last time you went out on bizness, du you remember how you come hum at the solemn hour o' twenty minits and a harf past twelve—me asittin' up fur you? Ah! when I was a young and lovely critter that hed my own way, I never sot up fur nobody. I dunno but what I don't desarve it. I knowed the men sect. No, don't go

a-lookin' repentant, Legal Lawyer Perkins. You know you hev done wrong; repentitude won't undu it.

Upon your honor you will tell the trewth? Well, tell it, and don't attempt tu deceive *me.*

You was jealous? Hey? Why, land o' liberty! I hadn't never gin you no cause.

LAWYER PERKINS.—Yes, mum. I am aware, mum, that it was merely imaginary. But permit me to explain, Mrs. Perkins, mum. Allow me to vindicate myself, mum. We members of the bar have lively imaginations, mum.

CHARITY.—Was it yer lively imagination that made you wink at the help?"

LAWYER PERKINS.—Allow me, mum. A few days ago a gentleman—a warrior of the Union army, mum—called on me to know what redress he could have in a case of winking. A wretch had winked at his wife. I gave him advice, mum, and that night sat at my fireside thinkin' it over, mum. Said I to myself, "What if some villain should wink at Mrs. Perkins!" My blood boiled. If possible, I would punish him with the utmost rigor of the law, I thought. If possible, I would bring him to the gallows. But, thought I, the thing is impossible; Mrs. Perkins resembles Diana. No man could wink at Diana. Involuntarily I imitated the motion with my own eye. Our domestic entered at that moment, and I appeared to wink at her. That, mum, is a true statement of the facts, given under my hand and seal—I mean to say a veracious statement, mum.

CHARITY.—Law! Well, p'raps it's true. I hope and trust it

is. Jest take yer feet off the fender, and pick up that hat off the table. I don't want the polish all scratched off. Considerin' who buys yer hats, you needn't get the fuzz all off the crown so soon, nuther. Well, now you be home at ten, or I'll fetch yer; and come in the basement way, and rub yer feet, and don't scratch matches on my new paper, and jest please remember not tu wake me up, fur I sha'n't set up tu-night, p'raps, and don't durst hang yer things on a cheer, but fold 'em and put 'em in a drawer.

LAWYER PERKINS.—Ahem! Have you a five-dollar bill about you, mum?

CHARITY.—Well, I hev. What fur?

LAWYER PERKINS.—To engage counsel for the defendant in Tibbs versus Boggins.

CHARITY.—There it is. I hope you'll clear that much. Don't expect it, though. Your clientudes is costly, seems tu me.

LAWYER PERKINS.—Thanks and *au revoir*, mum. I regret to absent myself, but juty calls. [Exit.]

* * * * * * *

SCENE, street corner. Enter pretty housemaid; also Lawyer Perkins.

LAWYER PERKINS.—You here, my dear? Just time to go to the theater. Can't stay for the afterpiece, though.

HOUSEMAID.—My! How she sticks to house!

LAWYER PERKINS.—No matter, we'll enjoy ourselves. A very nice play, my dear, and oysters and ale afterward.

HOUSEMAID.—And you'll give me them gloves?

LAWYER PERKINS.—Certainly, angel.

HOUSEMAID.—Oh, you duck! Go 'way. And what fibs you told about winking!

[Exit in an omnibus.]

NUMBER FORTY-TWO.

CHARITY RETURNS TO PEEKSKILL.

NEW YORK, September, 1866.

DEAR BROTHER JONATHAN:—Get the front room on the fust floor ready for me, and hev the walnut-tree bedstead put intu it, and a wardrobe, and a beurow, and four cheers, and a rocking-cheer, and the biggest lookin'-glass. I'm comin' back tu Peeks-kill fur good. 'Twould ha' been a massy ef I hadn't never come tu York; but sich was tu be. After movin' intu the fust circles, and livin' in the heith o' fashionable luxury, I'm obleeged tu put up with the old place agin.

Of course it's a blessin' tu you, fur your wife is a shiftless crit-ter, that dunno enough tu go in when it rains; but it'll be a change tu me, pertickerly as I don't like neither on ye.

I allers hev spoke plain, and lashed the hypocrites, and I glory in it. I du, indeed.

The reason I ain't happy tu Peekskill is because there ain't no one there o' intellectability nor polish. Jest as rough and vul-gar as an old shoe the heft o' 'em is. But needs must when the old gentleman drives ye. I've got tu come, and there's an eend on't.

You'll be surprised arter hearin' how't I was united tu a legal lawyer o' magnitude, and becomin' the queen o' serciety in York. But my feelin's has been so wounded I'm obleeged tu fly the scenes o' my former triumph.

Excuse the blots. I'm at present sheddin' tears, which is the occasion o' 'em.

The 'mount o' it is I can't hev him hung without disgracin' o' myself. Ef I could hev him executed under a fictitious name I'd du it. But 'tain't no credit tu a lady tu say her pardner was capitally punished, so I can't. I'd like to bile him like a lobster —pitch him intu hot water, and take him out red. Arter my resolves tu eschew the men sect, and never be nobody's pardner; arter treatin' them as adored me with disdain, jest think o' my bein' took in by sich a critter at last! It makes my blood bile. I don't so much keer fur his goin' off, fur he was an awful expense and bother. But he went and took my two hundred and fortys with him in a carpet-bag.

One night he comes in, and he rubs his hands, and he sots afore the fire, and sez he:

"Mrs. Perkins, mum, I have glorious news, mum."

"Hev you?" sez I. "I hope it's a clientude."

"Well, mum," sez he, "it's better than a thousand clientudes."

"Lor'!" sez I.

"Yes," sez he. "Now this cruel war is over, Uncle Sam, by which familiar name I allude tu our great country, mum, as an

affectionate relative, has promised to make every inhabitant's fortune, mum."

"Heow?" sez I.

"By tu hundred and forties," sez he.

"I've heerd on 'em," sez I, "but I don't quite see intu 'em." I didn't a bit, but I warn't goin' tu own up.

Then he sez, "You've only got tu get a lawyer tu convert your money intu tu hundred and forties and realize double."

Then he read a lot o' stuff out o' a paper, and it sounded purty good, and sez he:

"I don't desire to interfere; but ef I was you, mum—I give you the advice gratis, mum, which I would only du for a connection by marriage—I would invest, mum, in the tu hundred and forties, mum."

Sez I "I reckon I will."

"Well," sez he, "you'll be richer than John Jacob Astor in a year ef you du."

Sez I, "Heow am I tu du it?"

"Well," sez he, "I thought the notion would strike you favorably, so I fetched hum the dockyments."

And out he lugged a lot o' parchment and red tape.

Sez he, "Jest sign these, and it's done. I'll send it tu government, and you'll begin tu realize tu-forties in a year."

"Hey," sez I; "well, that's easy; and bein' as you air a legal lawyer, and we're pardners, why, it's all right, I suppose."

So I signed my name, and he buttoned up the papers in his coat.

All night long I dreamed about bein' a queen and hevin' my dress looped up with diamonds, and when I woke up Legal Lawyer Perkins was dressin' tu go out.

"You're airly," sez I.

"Yes," sez he. "I want to catch Uncle Sam before he goes out, mum."

"Why," sez I, "what hev you got your portmantle fur?"

Sez he, "Tu fetch hum the tu hundred and forties in."

"Well," sez I, "don't tell nobody what you've got intu it, or you'll hev it hooked. York is an awful wicked place."

"So it is, mum; you are correct as usual in your remarks, mum," sez he, and off he goes without waiting for his break-twist.

I had mine, and then I went up stairs tu derange the bed-room. Land o' liberty! fust thing I noticed was that his shirts and stockin's was gone. I begun tu get skeered. Either he's took 'em or they was stole. I was a victim o' repressed aggertation, but I didn't say nothin'. I relieved my feelin's by beatin' up the piller. As I punched his'n, suthin' tumbled out. Land o' Goshen! 'twas a note tu me. I jest send it fur you tu read:

MRS. PERKINS.—Madam: When you discover that I have left New York, pray do not be alarmed for my safety. Your kindness in signing your property over to me has placed me in comfortable circumstances. Before this reaches you I shall have left for Europe. As a lawyer, with some knowledge of legal matters, I respectfully inform you that the papers are all judiciously prepared, and that, having signed them (I allude to what we

playfully spoke of as the two-forties), it is beyond your power to revoke the signature, either to those or the articles of separation I drew up last night. Besides, I have been just and generous. Your money in the bank and the oil farm are mine; but your place at Peekskill is yet your own. Why not retire there? But time presses; I must close With many thanks for your obliging signature, I sign myself,

Yours, PERKINS.

It's all true, Jonathan. He had made a fool o' me, and with my sagacitude, think what a knowin' critter he must ha' bin!

I went intu highstrikes, and wouldn't be fetched tu fur hours, arter I'd found out he really had my money, and I'm goin' tu auction the furniture and start fur Peekskill. What's my loss is your gain, and I know you will be delighted; but it's a come down fur me, I tell ye.

Tell your wife to hev turkey the day I come, and biled onions and cranbysarce; and I shill want the closet on the entry fur my trunk and numberill. And now I come to think on't, put the mahogany stand in my room, tu, and the big lamp with a globe. I shall set there a good deal, fur your serciety won't be agreeable to me arter the intillectabil folks I've bin used tu. And send the wagon down to fetch me—remember.

Your affectionate sister,

Miss LEGAL LAWYER PERKINS,

(Late Miss Grinder.)

P. S.—Things does happen tu unship, you know, and he may git drownded on his way tu Europe. There's that comfort

left fur me. 'Tain't much, because I reckon he meant tu be hung, and water won't tetch him. But whatever happens, I sha'n't incurridge the intentions o' none o' the men sect. I know them now, the critters—a connivin' set o' wretches. No, don't give 'em no hopes o' that. I'm firm.

P. P. S.—Jest thinkin' on't, is General Brownbags o' the tavern a widdiwer yet? Ah, them that has broke hearts does sometimes come to repentance. I treated him shameful. You might jest mention how't I warn't sure but Legal Lawyer Perkins might git drownded goin' over, and how't I'd asked arter him. Ajeu, Jonathan,

Your onhappy sister,
Miss L. L. P., late C. G.

THE END.

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